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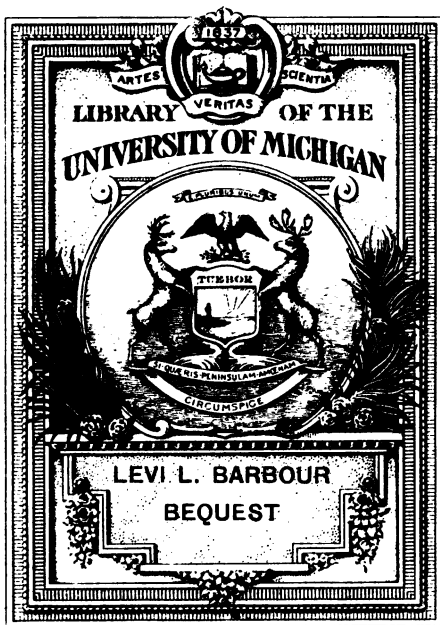
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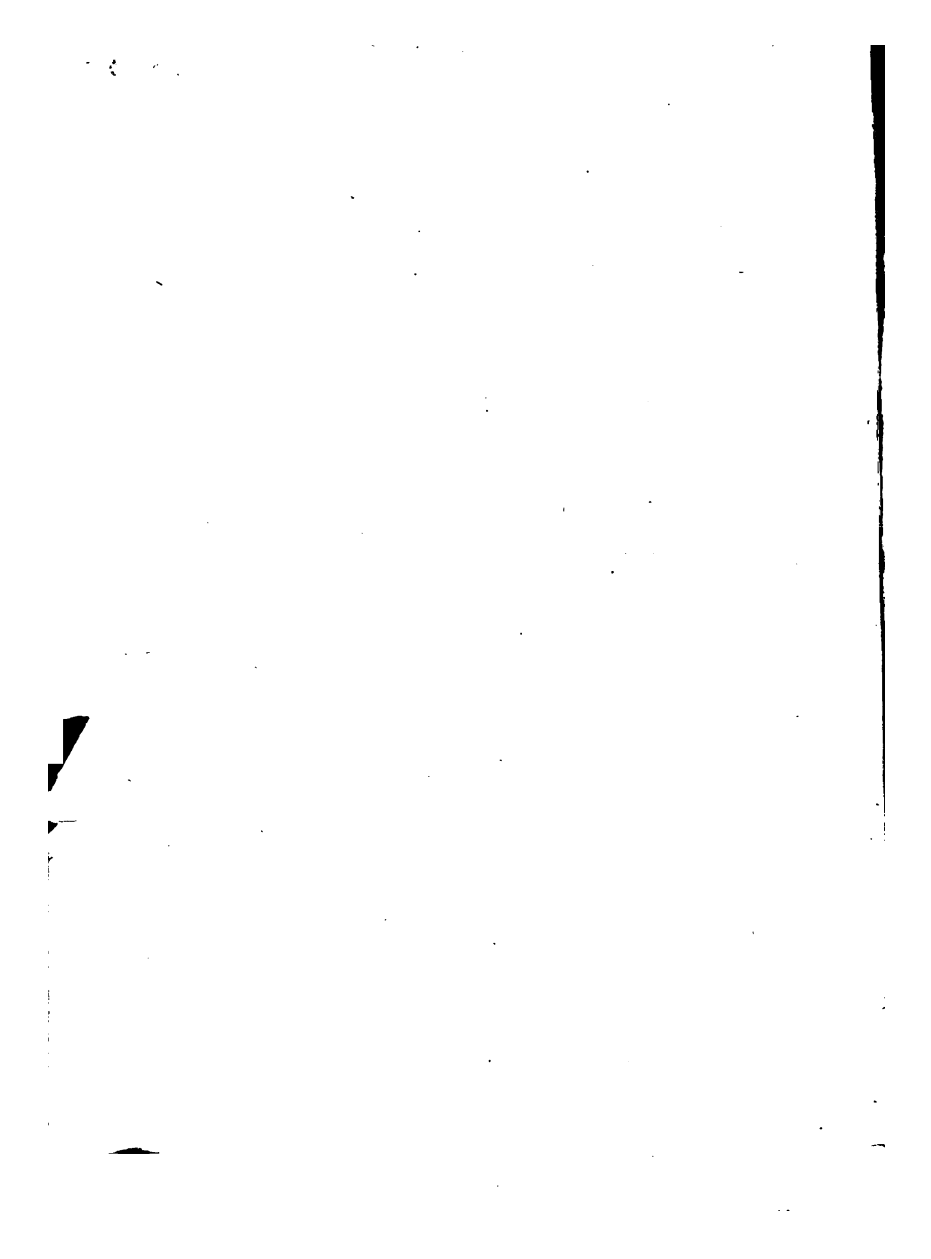
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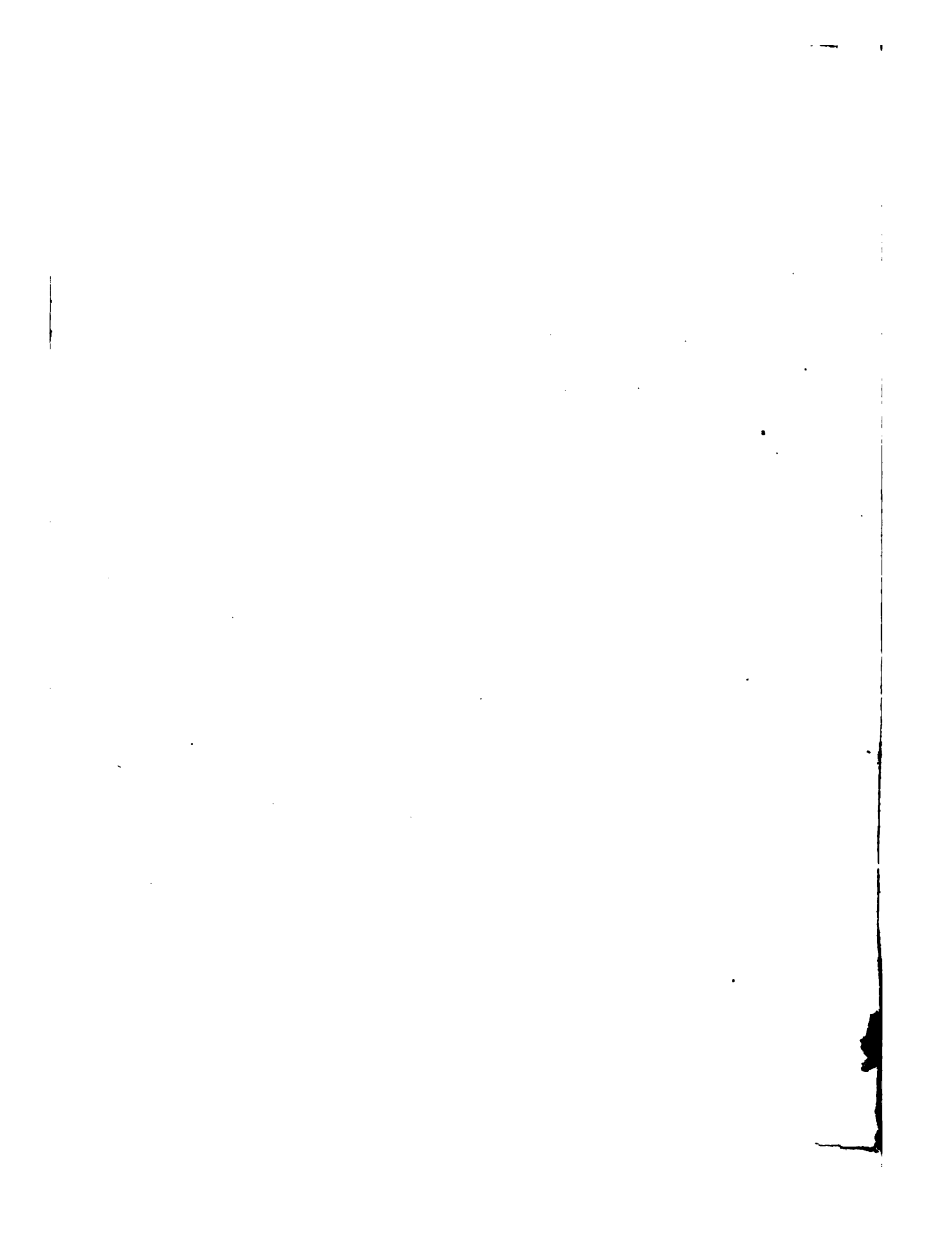








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Amo te amo me



Levi S. Benson  
Detroit

# THE AMAZON

BY

CARL VOSMAER

*FRONTISPIECE BY*

L. ALMA TADEMA, R. A.

*PREFACE BY*

GEORG EBERS

*TRANSLATED BY*

E. J. IRVING

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PRESS OF  
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TO  
MARTINUS NYHOFF,

MY FELLOW TRAVELLER,

PARTICIPATOR OF MANY OF THOSE IMPRESSIONS

WHICH HAVE TAKEN FORM IN

THESE PAGES;

MY KIND ADVISER, ENCOURAGER, AND

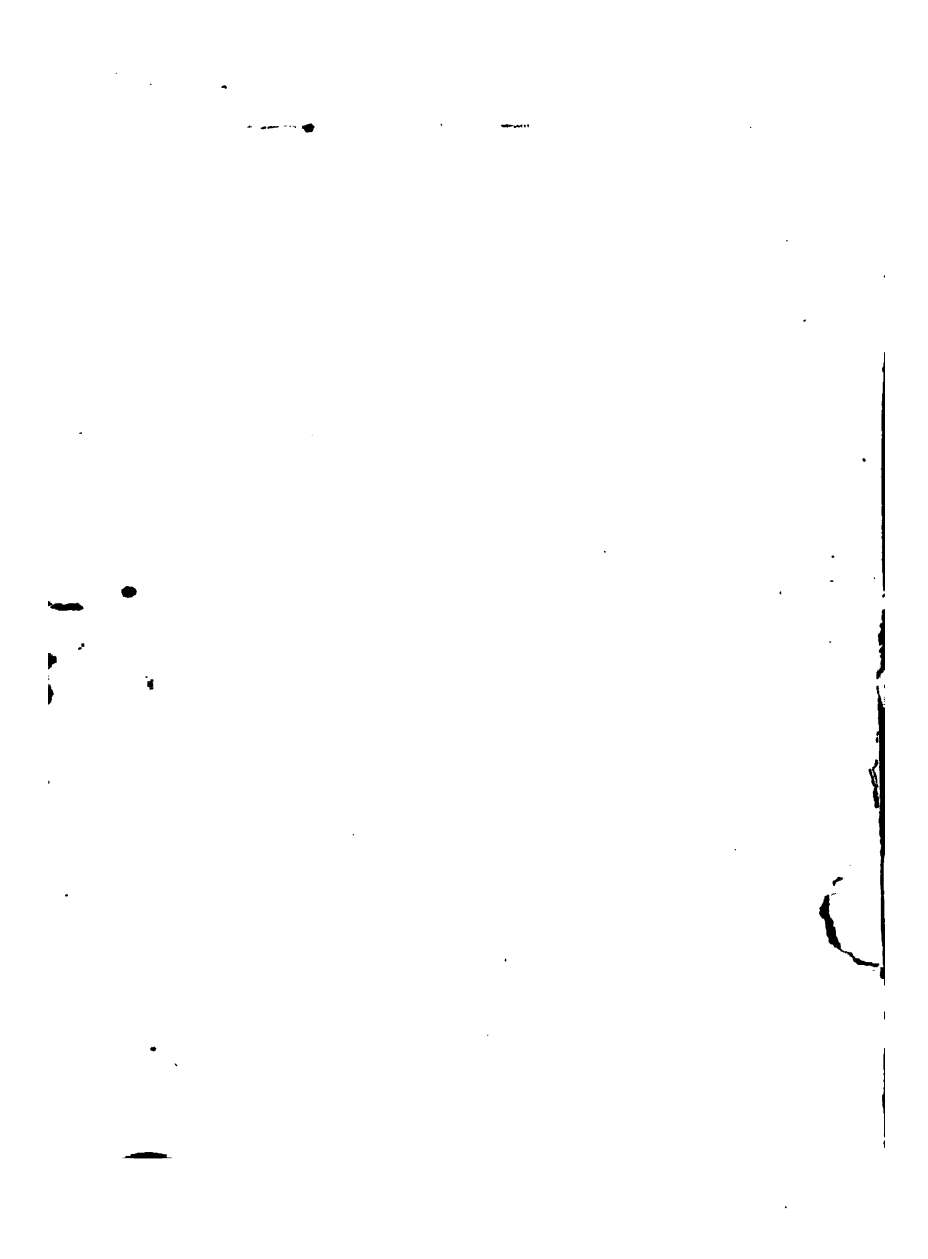
SUPPORTER, THIS EDITION IS

*Dedicated,*

AS A TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP,

BY

THE AUTHOR.





*Request of*  
*Levi L. Barbour*  
4-17-26

## P R E F A C E .

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FROM France there has passed into our country a literary current which calls itself Realistic. It prides itself on a close reproduction of reality, because it regards the actually existing—and that only—as real. In the eyes of the Realist the actual is everything, and he will not hear of its being ennobled and elevated into a higher phase of existence by means of the mysterious process which goes on in the soul of that creator whom we call an artist. The individual fact reigns supreme; the so-called actual is regarded as the only true thing; the word idea, as defined by Plato, is only known to the representatives of this school in philosophical terminology. They turn the mirror of the artist's soul, wherein the world of phenomena ought to be reflected more distinctly, more brightly and purely than in the souls of other men, into a photographer's plate; and, when this plate reproduces every spot on the surface of the object, they have attained the aim of their endeavors. Nay, the spot, the excrescence, is in their eyes the most important consideration; and—seeing that what is natural,

while so frequently at one with what is beautiful, can now and then be mean and deformed — they regard the coarse and abnormal as the natural, and choose it for the subject-matter of their works.

Ancient art likewise drew its materials from nature and reality, but not from the accidental reality of our modern Realists. That which the ancients presented to us as real, is absolute ; for it is the idea, the prototype of its order, which unites in itself everything that that order includes. "The light that never was on land or sea" has no existence for the Realists. They confine themselves exclusively to the actual object, which is perishable and transitory. It does not occur to them that the sublime pictures of a Dante, which show what never actually existed, and was present merely to the great poet's introverted eye, are a thousand times more truthful than their figures, "copied from real life," whose physical deformities and impurities, whose morbid propensities and moral aberrations they so assiduously study and depict.

Many of them profess that they seek to amend the faults of society by holding up the mirror to nature. The remedy they employ is disgust. Not pity and terror, but simply disgust, appears to be the æsthetic means by which the tragic writers among them endeavor to exercise a salutary influence.

It is a law in physics that every wave that rises must

leave a "wave valley" behind it; and if we compare romantic unnaturalness to the wave that tosses its foaming crest in the face of heaven, the Realistic movement is the inevitable wave-valley. To change the metaphor, we might call Realism the headache which has followed the intoxication of Romanticism.

Between the two there lies an immense space. No doubt the narrator, more especially the epic poet and his half-brother the novelist, must above all things be true to nature; but he, too, like every man who aspires to a place in the temple of Art, must strive after a higher truth than the grossly sensual, and never forget that Art, if transplanted into the domain of ugliness, can no more put forth blossoms than the palm can amidst snow and ice. The Beautiful is the native soil, the vital air, the sunshine and the rain of Art. Without beauty no work of art can exist; thus, though naked Realism may produce clever art-manufactories, it can never produce a genuine work of art.

Nevertheless, Realism is a noteworthy phenomenon, springing from the peculiar character of our times, and which, though neither elevating nor constructive, teaches the poet to exercise self-restraint, while it sharpens his eye for detail—for that which is small in nature and life. Since Realism began to be a power, intrinsic probability is no longer sufficient to satisfy unless it clothe itself with the garment of extrinsic possibility. Like

many poisons, this unhealthy French Realism may be a useful medicine; but in itself it falls as far short of genuine truth to nature as waxwork falls short of sculpture.

Among the poets who never overstep the limits of probability and yet aspire to realize the ideal, in whose works we breathe a purer air, who have power to enthral and exalt the reader's soul, to stimulate and enrich his mind, we must number the Netherlander Vosmaer.

The novel "Amazon," which attracted great and just attention in the author's fatherland, has been translated into our tongue at my special request. In Vosmaer we find no appalling incident, no monstrous or morbid psychology, neither is the worst side of human nature portrayed in glaring colors. The reader is afforded ample opportunity of delighting himself with delicate pictures of the inner life and spiritual conflicts of healthy-minded men and women. In this book a profound student of ancient as well as modern art conducts us from Paestum to Naples, thence to Rome, making us participators in the highest and greatest the Eternal City can offer to the soul of man.

Vosmaer is a poet by the grace of God, as he has proved by poems both grave and gay; by his translation of the Iliad into Dutch hexameters, and by his lovely epos "Nanno." His numerous essays on æsthetics, and more especially his famous "Life of Rem-

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brandt," have secured him an honorable place among the art-historians of our day. As Deputy Recorder of the High Court of Justice he has, during the best years of his life (he was born March 20, 1826), enjoyed extensive opportunities of acquiring a thorough insight into the social life of the present, and the labyrinths of the human soul. That "The Amazon," perhaps the maturest work of this author, should — like Vosmaer's other writings — be totally unknown outside Holland, is owing solely to the circumstance that most of his works are written in his mother-tongue, and are therefore accessible only to a very small circle of readers.

How few of us know anything of the remarkable poems of the old writers, Vondel and Cats, of the moderns, Van Lennep and Bilderdijk ! Who among us has made acquaintance with the charming verses of De Genestet and Tollens, or with the wonderful creations of Miss Opzoomer (A. S. C. Wallis), or the writings of that richly imaginative, warm-hearted judge of human nature, Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint ?

It is a painful thing for a poet to have to write in a language restricted to a small area ; and it is the bounden duty of the lover of literature to bring what is excellent in the literature of other lands within the reach of his own countrymen. Among these excellent works Vosmaer's "Amazon" must unquestionably be reckoned. It introduces us to those whom we cannot fail to consider

an acquisition to our circle of acquaintances. It permits us to be present at conversations which — and not least when they provoke dissent — stimulate our minds to reflection. No one who listens to them can depart without having gained something; for Vosmaer's novel is rich in subtle observations and shrewd remarks, in profound thoughts and beautifully-conceived situations.

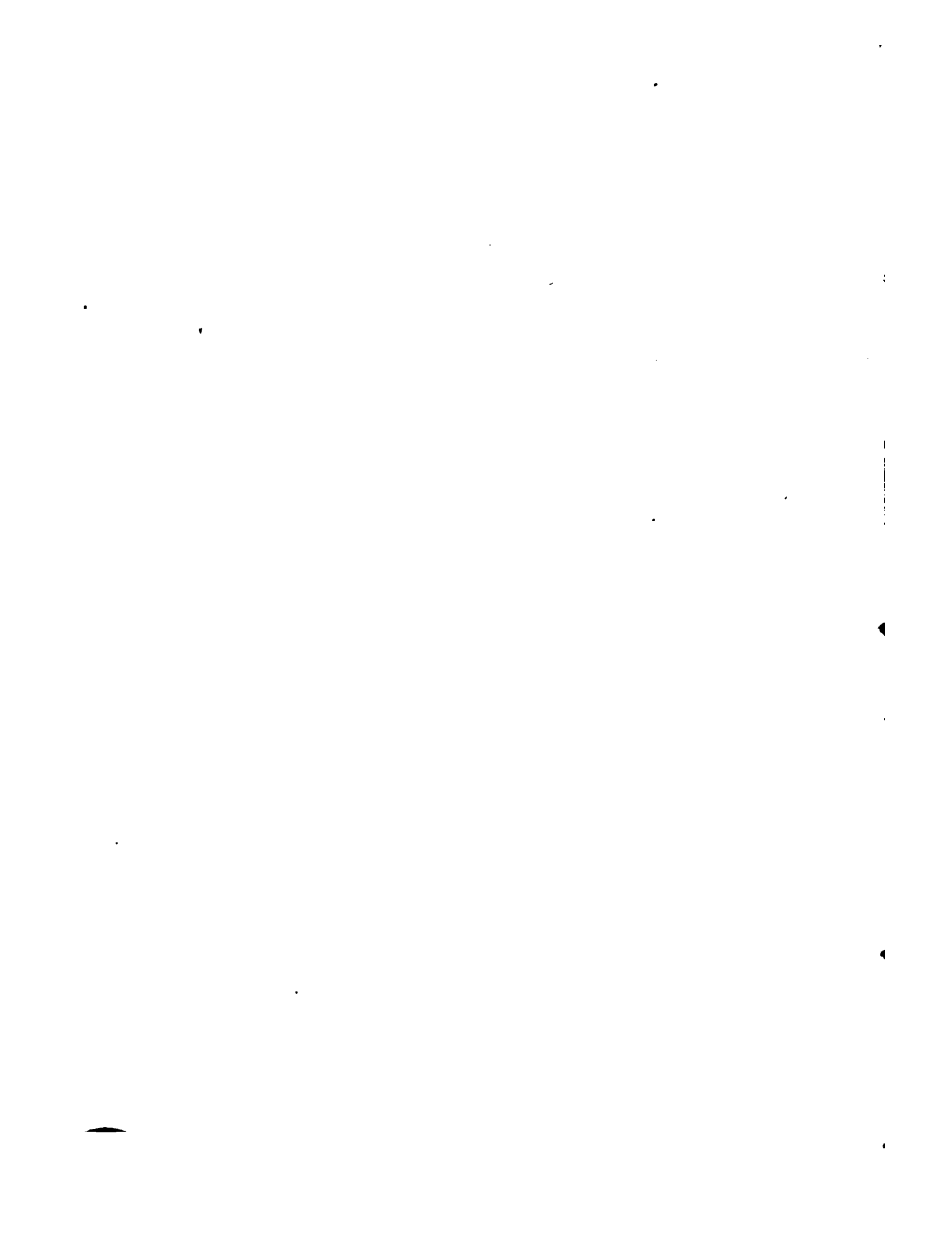
Marciana, who must lose herself to gain herself, is a grand and nobly-drawn female figure; while Aisma is not one of those lay-figures that pose as painters in so many stories, but a true and genuine artist. The apostle of the gross Realistic creed will doubtless pronounce the figure much too perfect, and reproach the author with having allowed too little shadow to all this light; yet this very Aisma is a character drawn direct from life, an artist whom many of us will have no difficulty in recognizing. In drawing this figure the author has played the portrait painter; and he could not have heightened the likeness by a single stroke without transgressing the bounds of the permissible.

Who would not wish to count the genial humanist Van Walborch among his acquaintances? How happy is the sketch of the light-hearted cripple Salvati! It is quite by chance that the pitiable Ada bears my surname; but many a maiden to whom I am kinsman has had her life's happiness destroyed by the unmercifulness of those

who call themselves by the name of Him who Himself is Mercy.

But I am not writing a criticism. I desire merely to account for my wish that this art-novel should be made known to those among us who take pleasure in serious poetic narrative. I feel assured that the many who share my taste in this respect will thank me for the recommendation.

GEORG EBERS.





## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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THE life of the accomplished author of "The Amazon" offers no materials for a biographical sketch, being merely the quiet, uneventful career of a scholar, artist, and man of letters. Born in the Hague, March 20, 1826, Charles Vosmaer studied jurisprudence at the University of Leyden, taking his degree in 1851. For many years he was Deputy Recorder to the High Court of Justice in his native town, an office which he resigned in 1873, in order to devote himself wholly to art and letters.

As a poet, novelist, essayist, and art-historian, Vosmaer has exercised, and is exercising, a powerful and salutary influence on the literature of his country. The rock on which Dutch authors are apt to split is not so much the Romanticism and ultra-Realism that Vosmaer's Van Walborch abominates, and Georg Ebers lashes so severely in his Preface to the German Edition of "The Amazon"—a translation of which is prefixed to this publication—as didacticism, utilitarianism, domestic commonplace, a tendency to regard the subject

and sentiments of a book as constituting its only value, forgetting that the indispensable requisite to a work of art is beauty of form. Against this widely-spread heresy Vosmaer has been waging warfare since 1855, when he entered the field of letters with a series of sketches, afterwards collected into a volume. These were followed by contributions to various periodicals; by two valuable books on Rembrandt and his predecessors; and—to mention only the most important—by “*Vogels van diverse Pluimage*” (Birds of Diverse Plumage), a delightful collection of tales, poems, sketches, critical and descriptive essays; *Londinias*, a poem in hexameters, giving a highly-humorous and entertaining account of a trip to London, undertaken by the author and three of his friends; a masterly translation of the *Iliad* into Dutch hexameters; the exquisite Greek Idyl, “*Nanno*”; and, lastly, the charming æsthetic novel now presented to the public in English dress.

In all his writings Vosmaer pursues one great object—the advancement of æsthetics and the cult of beauty.

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty; that is all  
Ye know on earth—and all ye need to know.

Thus Keats sang, and so says our author. Like Keats he has steeped his soul in Greek grandeur and repose. He strives, and not in vain, to clothe the highest results of modern thought in the matchless forms of

ancient Greek art. With regard to his style, it is marvellous how the vigorous and masculine, and—to foreign ears at least—somewhat harsh-sounding Dutch language melts into melody at his touch, lending itself readily to even the billowing music of the Greek hexameter. “Philosophy and history,” he says, “must help art; but the only scope and design of art is beauty, and so it must remain.”

Therefore, leaving to others the discussion of warring creeds and systems, Vosmaer takes his stand where he has placed his Aisma—on the simple creed of beauty, which includes, as a matter of course, the true and good—on the pure religion of humanity. That this apotheosis of human nature itself—human nature fully and harmoniously developed—should provoke strenuous opposition in a country where religious controversies run very high, is inevitable; but to quote our author's own remark on Rembrandt: “It is only the mighty who provoke antagonism.”

Vosmaer, then, is the leader—we may say the founder—of the æsthetic movement in Holland. Notwithstanding the culture required to understand his allusions, and the difficulties presented by a style kept sedulously free from familiar commonplace, and enriched with choice old words exhumed from the earlier strata of the language, his works have secured a very wide circle of readers. “The Amazon,” in especial, was

received with so much favor that three editions have been called for in rapid succession, and it has been translated into French, German, and now into English; while we understand that an Italian version is in course of preparation.

Great as is the effect of his books; it is perhaps as co-editor of the "*Nederlandsche Spectator*" that Vosmaer exercises the widest and most beneficial influence. His exquisite taste and vast stores of information are not only employed in educating the popular feeling for æsthetics by means of his criticisms of current literature and art, but in seeking out and fostering rising talent. The columns of the "*Spectator*" are the nursery gardens of young Dutch talent, and Vosmaer is a skilful gardener. While ready and eager to prop and protect the tender plant, he has no hesitation in using the pruning-knife when needful, and is consequently looked up to as "the guide, philosopher, and friend" of the worthy aspirant to literary honors.

It only remains to me to add that the frontispiece, which is reproduced here by kind permission of the Dutch publisher, Mr. Nyhoff, was specially designed for "*The Amazon*" by the author's friend, Mr. L. Alma Tadema, R.A., and to commend the work to the perusal—the translation to the indulgence—of the English public.

THE TRANSLATOR.

# THE AMAZON.

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## CHAPTER I.

“CARA MIA SORELLA:—Did you receive the post-card with my hasty words from Genoa? Only now that I am in Florence can I write in detail as I promised; for I have been rushing over land, stream, and rock, and now for the first time find a resting-place. But as yet I find no rest for my soul; that is still to come, if indeed there is any hope that it will come at all. Here I am really in Italy! All I was acquainted with before was Venice and a part of Lombardy. But for us—barbarians and Teutons that we are—that is not the Italy of our dreams. The country is too like our own; it even has willows and meadows and ditches; and Venice has so much of the romantic. At Genoa I first beheld the true Italy, sunny and southern; marble, pure types, flowering orange-trees, aloes, cactuses by the dozen. And now Florence! Still, I shall make but a short stay here—the sweet seductions of the early-naïve and the full-blown Renaissance would be too apt to distract my thoughts, and my immediate aim is to make myself thoroughly

antique. Only then can I break with modern sentimentalism. Have I left it *oltremonti*—on the other side of the Mount Cenis? or has it accompanied me, and will nothing but time wear out the impression? I fear so; I still think of it too much.

“I prefer to be alone; company is tiresome to me, and I must be tiresome to others. A man with a wounded spirit is tedious or absurd in the eyes of those about him; and, as I do not desire to pose in either attitude, I hold myself aloof. Yet I try to banish all this to the further side of the Alps; I have come here to bask in the sunshine, to find strength, to escape from brain-rack and heart trouble, to raise my mind and my art above the level of the bustling crowd. That cannot be done without pushing and trampling. No matter; my end once attained, I shall look down on these troubles and laugh them to scorn, with a soul that has been saved, and an art that is bright and powerful, free from pettiness, instinct with healthy sentiment, but devoid of morbid sentimentality. This is what Italy and her art, especially her antique art, must do for me. I will wrap myself in the antique world as in a stately toga, and endeavor to catch the broad, dignified, beautiful, world-mastering spirit of the ancients. What arrogance! I think I hear you say; but without proper pride one can never achieve anything of importance. I should not like to say this to everybody, but you will not misinterpret it. Not but what you will preach amiability and pliability; but believe me, my dear, the one is trampled upon and the other destroys decision of

character. Ay! I know you possess both qualities without any such evil consequences; still, excuse me if I say that it is only a tranquil soul like yours, living apart from the work-day world and its conflicts, that can reach that pitch of perfection. We of the great mass, if we wish to hold our ground in the crowd, must push obstacles aside right and left.

"The day after to-morrow I am going to Rome. I write this as quietly as if it were not everything. I in Rome! I feel myself a foot taller only to think of it. I felt something of the sort when we had got through the Mount Cenis tunnel, and I once more saw daylight — the *new day*. I felt that a mountain wall separated the thought-weary, melancholy North from the bright, joyous South. Yes! already then I felt myself taller; so if this goes on I shall grow to such a size that I shall not be able to get back through the tunnel. That does not matter, though; for then I can leap the mountain itself at a bound. You see the air is taking effect upon me. When once the patient begins to mock at himself, he is beginning to look objectively at his suffering, and thus unconsciously to put it at a distance. Now, lest I should shoot up suddenly in Rome to too great an altitude, I intend staying there but a few days, and then go direct to Naples. After that I shall spend all the rest of my time in Rome.

"Good-bye, my patient confidante, my second mother.

"Yours,

"SIWART."

## CHAPTER II.

ON the mountain-slope facing the glorious bay of Salerno lies the town of that name, the ancient Salernum, where reminiscences of Hellas and Latium, of Lombards and Normans, Hohenstaufen and Angevin, are overlaid and entwined.

As the aloes ever unfold new leaves, while the traces of the old decayed ones remain visible, so is it with memories.

In the Lombard Cathedral, under antique marble columns, rests, according to legend, the Apostle Matthew. In sarcophagi of the pagan empire reposes the Christian dust of archbishops, unoffended by the Bacchanalian *relievos* that adorn their front and sides, where beautiful youths and scantily-draped maidens mingle in the frenzy, the Dionysiac dance, which survived in a Christian form as that of St. Vitus. Here is also seen part of an antique column-shaft, on which it is said that three saints were decapitated. In later ages the process was reversed, and the beautiful antique columns were decapitated by the saints.

To get to Paestum the traveller goes by rail from Salerno to Battipaglia, and there finds a carriage in waiting, which conveys him in two hours to the celebrated temples. Thus also went Siwart Aisma, and the little Neapolitan horses had been trotting merrily for



some time, jingling the bells attached to their harness and bearing proudly the cocked feathers that adorned their heads, when another carriage was observed on the road before him. It came to a sudden halt, and Siwart saw that one of the horses, which had sprung to the side of the road, was shaking and shivering like a leaf. The driver covered its head with a rug, in order to soothe its excitement.

Aisma asked his coachman what was the matter.

"*È—niente—un giramento*" (a dizziness), said the fellow, shrugging his shoulders with a smile.

There were two ladies and two gentlemen in the carriage. After a little time the horse became more tranquil and the journey was resumed. But before ten minutes had elapsed the poor animal once more began to shiver so violently that its legs knocked against each other, and the second horse getting excited too, reared, swerved, and broke the traces. In the confusion two of the travellers sprang out of the carriage—one, a lady, losing her equilibrium, and falling on the way-side.

Aisma immediately alighted and hurried to her aid, but raising herself quickly she pointed to the carriage, which was swaying suspiciously, and cried: "There, help that infirm man—quick!"

Aisma now observed that there was in the carriage a man with a powerful head and a black beard, who was rendered helpless by reason of his curiously diminutive stature. He raised himself on his crutches, but could not descend from the vehicle. He was quite

lame. Aisma lifted him like a child and set him on the ground. Then he beheld a remarkable figure; above he was like a strong man, but his knees were bent quite double, thus giving him the appearance of a man hopping on his haunches.

There was still a young lady left in the carriage, who leant back on the cushions with an air of unconcern. She now accepted Aisma's hand to assist her in alighting.

"That poor horse," she said.

The animal, overcome with heat and fatigue, was unable to proceed farther, so the party were brought to a standstill half-way, in the midst of an uninhabited district. Aisma accordingly invited them to take seats in his carriage—for they were also going to Paestum—an offer which, after the due amount of polite hesitation, was gratefully accepted. The poor horse was led slowly to the nearest *osteria*, the carriage was left standing on the high-road, and the sound horse was harnessed beside the other two. Aisma assisted the lame man, who appeared to be an Italian, into the carriage, then gave his aid to the ladies and to the elder gentleman, who wanted to mount the box, where Aisma had of course meant to sit himself. But after the hampers of provisions, the plaids, and the white parasols had been stowed away in front and back, as well as under the seats, room was made for Aisma, and all five managed to squeeze themselves into the carriage.

"We are under a great obligation to you," said the elder gentleman; "we have taken possession of your

carriage; at least do us the pleasure of taking a seat beside us."

Such an incident naturally breaks the ice and establishes a degree of familiarity. The lady, whom the old gentleman playfully twitted with her awkward tumble, laughed, covered her face with her hands as if somewhat ashamed of the figure she had made. By degrees the whole party glided into animated conversation.

The Italian excepted, they were all fellow-countrymen. Cards were exchanged by way of introduction.

"Siwart Aisma!" said the elder gentleman, looking at the card; "a Frisian, I presume?"

Aisma bowed assent.

"Signor G. Salviati, of Rome," said the elder man; "a musician and a friend of ours." This was the lame man. "My niece," he continued; and Aisma read the name on her card: *Mevrouw van Buren van Rodenrijs*. "So she is married," he thought to himself. "And our friend, Miss Ada Ebers; and here, to finish up the exchange of credentials, your humble servant." Aisma read, Doctor Quirinus van Walborch.

"Your name is well known in the world of politics," said Aisma.

"No more of politics," cried Mr. van Walborch, gaily; "I have bid adieu to them, happily, *cedat toga Musis*. I have laid aside my toga to serve the Muses; I live now for fairer and better things—my long-loved arts and letters."

"Your name is also familiar," said Mrs. van Buren.

"We have just been to see the beautiful pictures of a painter who bears that name . . ."

"Thank you," said Aisma, with a courteous bow and smile.

"What! you are the painter? This is indeed a privilege!"

"Ah," said Salviati, "the giddy horse has brought us good luck."

"Oh! the poor beast," sighed Miss Ada.

"Ay, it needs must bring good luck; it had four white feet, and

Four white feet bring  
Fortunate meeting,

as our proverb says."

"I ought to apologize for the rude way in which I rejected your assistance," said Mrs. van Buren to Aisma, "but I was so afraid that harm would come to our good friend." Here, as she spoke, she playfully patted Salviati's hands, and he replied with a friendly smile:

"Oh, no fear of me; I always come off well."

"But, Ada," said Mrs. van Buren, "how could you sit so quietly?"

Ada raised her eyes slightly and said:

"Oh! there was no danger, I thought, and I was so sorry for that poor beast."

The broad, straight highway to Paestum leads through an extensive plain. It is mostly moorland, thinly sprinkled with dwarfed trees and stunted shrubs, and here and there a swamp. To the left the travellers

descried in one of the bogs a herd of black buffaloes, some of them standing up to their flanks in water, others wholly immersed, all but their hippopotamus-like heads. How picturesque it looked!

Gradually the soil began to show signs of cultivation, and long lines of laborers—ten to fifteen in a row—would be seen busy hoeing the ground. Sometimes they paused to rest, offering a spectacle worthy a painter, as they stood there in their white or light blue trousers, their jackets flung over one shoulder, leaning on their long spades and refreshing themselves with draughts from straw-bound bottles.

Two mounted *gens-d'armes* approached. Salviati remarked that the road was quite safe now, and that they only served as a sort of field police, and had not to act against brigands.

Mr. van Walborch, who remembered a very different state of things, remarked that agriculture had succeeded where everything else had failed. Not only the robber, but even the insalubrity of the climate was becoming a thing of the past, now that the cultivation of the soil was more general. Houses were even to be seen here and there, with men and women working industriously under a burning sun. In such spots good drainage and field-tilling have banished from atmosphere and habits the *aria cattiva*, the fever and the brigands.

At last Mrs. van Buren called out that she saw the temples! The party stood up in the carriage in order to enjoy the first distant glimpse.

Soon they neared the ruined city walls; here had

once been the city gate. Then they passed the little *osteria* where the carriages put up, and then to their right uprose the temple of Ceres, and soon after they drew rein before that of Poseidon.

Here the travellers alighted, and took the hampers with them, intending to lunch under the shadow of the columns. The custodian unlocked the gate of the tangle-grown meadow, in which stand the two principal buildings.

The temple of Poseidon is the finest and best preserved specimen of antique architecture that Italy possesses. Here we see the spirit of Greek art in Doric severity and grandeur. It was a glorious day, and golden sunlight heightened every color. Overhead hung a deep blue sky, while below spread the wide green plain, covered with long rank grasses. Close to the base of the temple grew supple, curling, leaves of acanthus, delicately notched fronds of fern, and purple and white field flowers.

In such surroundings stands the noble edifice, a perfect structure still, though with no other roof save the blue vault of heaven. Three steps lead to the entrance, which consists of six Doric columns with sharp cut flutings. At their base they are more than six feet in diameter, so that four outstretched arms can barely encompass them, then they taper by delicate gradations to a height of nearly twenty feet. On their broad projecting capitals rest the two divisions of the entablature; the plain architrave and the frieze with its alternate triglyphs and metopes. This, again, is crowned

by the projecting cornice, which is surmounted in its turn by the gentle slope of the fronton, that blunt triangle which the Greeks likened to, and named after, an eagle with outspread wings. In its palmy days the temple was coated with hard and lustrous stucco, and its pediment adorned with statues.

Now all these things have disappeared, together with the touches of bright, harmonious color that once tinted the mouldings. But, although a ruin, the pile is still grand and beautiful. Time, while robbing it of the bloom of its youth, has given compensation in the deeper impressiveness of its solemn dignity, heightened by the stern gravity of hoary antiquity.

The Doric style of architecture is grave and stately, but that gravity was originally tempered by radiance and color. Now, from the weatherworn travertine stone, to which air and sunshine have imparted tints of warm yellow and rusty-red, the splendor has departed, but the gravity remains perchance even deeper and sterner than at first.

If the eye is sufficiently trained and cultivated to be open to things not merely pleasing; if we acknowledge that the beauty of architecture does not by any means consist in the accessories — in profusion of ornament, in the childish toy-work of fantastic moulding and carving, but in the proportion of great and small, of principal and subordinate forms, of straight and curved, of horizontal and vertical lines; if, in short, we know that it is mathematics become poetry, then alone can we possess a true feeling for architecture; then alone we

learn to delight in those lines, soaring, circling, curving in the bold sweep of the profile of a cornice, in those tapering columns, pure as a crystal, whose increasing is no more perceptible than that of the throat of a youthful maiden, rising airily, bending like the stem of a palm, like the plumes of a seraph's wing. Then we enjoy all this as a music of lines, as a symphony in stone; for the melody and harmony of the lines affect us exactly as the notes in music. The soul thrills with an overpowering sense of sublime beauty, and we gaze on it in silence.

The ages themselves have given a certain consecration to all this beauty. Four-and-twenty centuries have swept over it. What was Hellenic made place for the Roman; what was Roman for the Christian and, in its turn again, for the Saracen, and that for the Norman. War, poverty, marsh-fever depopulated the land; wind and rain gnawed into the polished walls; tiny plants bored their way into the joints and loosened the mighty blocks of stone; barbarians carried off the marble and metal, and yet nothing is lost but the external, the subordinate attractiveness; the beauty remains, and though mutilated, alone in the midst of an unbounded plain, yet towering high and sublime above ruin and wilderness, stands this work of art — art which, though all else succumb, is too strong for Time.

If we enter and traverse the temple, a magnificent view presents itself. Through the rich golden columns, half in light, half in shadow, with their wedge-like streaks of sunlight in the hollow of the flutings, we be-



hold the green landscape, with an occasional house of glaring white, the distant plain, and on the edge of the horizon the grand undulations of the Apennines; while in the background, between two column shafts, we catch a glimpse of the dark blue sea and the sparkling azure sky.

After examining the neighboring basilica, which is, however, far less impressive than the temple of Poseidon, our travellers returned thither, and seated themselves on the edge of the temple cella. Here the hampers were unpacked. It is such a pleasure to feel one's self every inch a man, capable of enjoying the highest, yet not insensible to even the humblest and most commonplace, of mundane pleasures. On the estrade along the side-wall, in the shadow of a massive pillar, the ladies spread the snowy table-cloth, and arranged the noontide meal. Salviati, who had been hopping about the ruins with astonishing celerity, now joined the company; and as the little figure was seen approaching, Mr. van Walborch could not help thinking of the lame Hephæstus serving the gods in the hall of Zeus.

"Ah! *Signor pittore*, what a beautiful bit of still life!" exclaimed Salviati, pointing to the well-spread table, which, indeed, looked picturesque with its oranges and its elegant wicker flasks of white Capri.

"My æsthetic sense," said the vivacious young widow, "has given way for the moment to my realistic appetite. Paestum was a colony of the Sybarites—was it not, uncle? So here we need not be ashamed of enjoying the good things of life."

"Not at all, not at all, Marciana," said the old gentleman, as he sipped the fragrant Capri with evident enjoyment.

The sociability, the new impressions of nature and art opened every heart, and entwined the travellers in the rosy chains of early intimacy. All were merry but Ada, who was singularly quiet. She looked like a flower that had been plucked by some careless hand in the course of a walk, and carried along drooping and thirsting for water. She was pretty, but her first youth was past, leaving nothing behind it but an air of pale distinction. She seemed to be exceedingly sensitive; the sun blistered her face, the insects tormented her. She kept her hands armed with long chamois leather gloves because the scorching sunbeams hurt them; she ate nothing but an indivisible morsel of one of those little Italian fowls, and an orange, the juice of which she allowed to run unchecked along her gloved fingers. The young widow was not afraid either to bare her hands or to use them, and yet they remained as white and smooth as delicately-tinted ivory. As for Mr. van Walborch, though his present was hale and green, yet his past was longer than his future was likely to be; therefore he was a man of many memories. In a country like Italy, in a place like Paestum, recollections are for the most part summoned up by the power of present impressions. He spoke much of the thoughts that well up out of the past in such a spot; he restored to their imagination the temple, with its richly-tinted ornaments, its statue of the ocean-god, its odor of sacri-

fices, the life of the antique city in this flourishing district.

This background of memory contributes powerfully to the fascination exercised by ancient monuments.

"There are no roses here now," said he, when the young widow had finished culling a nosegay of wild flowers; "Paestum was once celebrated by the poets for its roses. Virgil speaks of the *biferi rosaria Paesti*, and Ovid sings of the *tepidi rosaria Paesti*, the rose-garden of the twice-blossoming, the sultry Paestum. *Tepidique rosaria Paesti*," he repeated, chanting the musically cadenced Latin with keen pleasure.

"No, not a single rose to be found; only wild flowers, which some people call weeds," she said, with a reproachful smile.

The party wandered about awhile, now here, now there, threading among the lofty pillars of the temple. Then they descended the steps and, wading through the long grass, reached the entrance gate. Yet many a glance did they cast back at the glorious monument of ancient art.

At the gate sat a young woman, the custodian's wife. What a contrast! There behind them the hoary relic of antique beauty, here blooming youth in its loveliest form.

Aisma noticed her and pointed her out to the others, who soon clustered around her as if spellbound. She was sitting on a chair placed against the massive pilaster at the entrance. She was nineteen years of age, a

youthful mother with a bambino of ten months lying half-naked on her lap. Her white dress was open a little way above her low, black silk bodice; her heavy, black tresses were bound high on her head in a thick roll; her eyelashes and eyebrows were as velvet, soft as the bur of Rembrandt's finest etching; her large, handsome mouth had white and regular teeth. Above all, there was a radiance about her that was enchanting; she seemed as if enveloped in a glow of light which streamed from out her being,—from the brown, lustrous eyes, the ruby lips, the ruddy, amber complexion. With her head slightly inclined forward, and her lips parted in a smile, she shot a glance from under her heavy lashes at the party gazing at her in rapture. There was about the picture a Titian-like glow, with the delicacy and modesty of one of Raphael's Madonnas. Oh, it is no wonder that, where such women exist, such paintings are produced. Each of the party sought an excuse to remain looking at her. One played with her baby, the other asked how old it was, a third gave it an orange, a fourth gave it another orange, and still they gazed and gazed, astonished and enchained; and the beautiful young mother knew well enough why the strangers ever sought some new excuse for lingering, and the ripe lips opened wide enough to show the glittering teeth. She laughed and blushed, with a little confusion and a little gratified self-love contending in the large, brown eyes which she had lifted and needed not to drop again, because she felt how pure was the admiration she excited.

"What a glorious creature!" exclaimed Mrs. van Buren. "Quite a Madonna and child. What a radiance—as if she were sitting in an aureole!"

"Such a radiance," said Aisma, "which envelops some beautiful women, may have led the early painters to represent the Madonna crowned with an aureole, or against a background of uniform gold."

"Yes; and is it strange that the great Italian painters deemed it enough thus to represent the Virgin Mary many thousand times, without any other accessory, merely a beautiful mother with her infant? Is not that divine enough? Properly speaking, is there anything more divine? It is divinity of beauty and of motherhood at once!"

"It is truly a mysterious power that is wielded by such a beautiful woman," said Aisma; "and"—this reflection slipped from him unawares—"no wonder that she causes such violent disturbances by means of it!"

It did not escape Mrs. van Buren, who was fully conscious that she herself possessed such a power, that a cloud passed over his countenance as he spoke. Her feminine curiosity was excited, but she only observed, by way of creating a diversion:

"Oh, there is yet a Paestum rose; this is the last rose of Paestum."

Still the travellers lingered, reluctant to take final leave of the lovely apparition; but at last the glorious presence had, like so many others, to fade away into a memory.

They now proceeded to the smaller temple of Ceres,

which, besides being less perfect, suffers by comparison with the greater impressiveness of that of Poseidon.

There they bought some antique trifles offered for sale by the country people. Mrs. van Buren was greatly delighted with a small terra-cotta head, which Mr. van Walborch pronounced to be an Artemis; and Aisma, who had purchased two bronze rings, begged permission to present Mrs. van Buren with one as a remembrance of their trip. She laughingly accepted, and placed it on her finger.

At the *osteria* they once more entered their carriage. Aisma sprang lightly on the box beside the merry, good-natured bandit who served as coachman, and the three ponies trotted briskly along towards Battipaglia.

The travellers journeyed back together to Naples, where they all meant to spend some days longer. They parted with many promises of a speedy meeting.

### CHAPTER III.

“DEAREST SISTER:—Thanks for your delightful letter, which I found waiting for me at the Poste Restante. Write as much as you can, for my spirit still boils up at times against the world and the race of men. Bah! there is so much coarseness and meanness. You warn me against self-torture. Do not attempt excuses for what you call preaching. You have free leave to

say what you like, though I cannot promise to agree with you. But is it self-torture when we are embittered against *others*, against those who have tortured us? Oh, child! you know nothing of the world, and that is the reason you have still so much optimism left. My wound is closed indeed, but I still feel its effects. She whom I loved so purely has treated me—to speak the plain truth—thus badly, because she was made of Nature's coarsest clay, out of which are compounded most of those persons the world holds respectable, out of her fragments left over on the sixth day, when everything else, even the creeping things, had been finished off. Well, fight the world with its own weapons; that is the only plan. No headway can be made with generosity; haughty sarcasm alone can avail us in the jostling crowd. We must seek to be feared; those that seek to be loved count for nothing. The earth, once for all, is a block of stone with a multitude of sharp points. Therefore do not try to walk barefoot, but pull on hobnailed shoes.

“As yet I have not painted much. True, I have made some designs and studies. Helen is somewhat advanced too, but more in conception than execution. You must write to me at Rome; I have kept my old rooms, Via Sistina; but I intend staying here another good week. My Paestum acquaintances also remain some days still. We have been making plans to see Pompeii, Vesuvius, Capri, etc. Old Mr. van Walborch is extremely prepossessing, a gentleman in his manners, frank and upright in character, with a mind wonderfully

well-stored. I have learned thousands of things from him about the ancients, their art, and more especially their literature. He looks like one of the old Roman emperors without a beard. When I say 'old' it is a way of speaking we younger men have, though, by the way, I am not exactly a chicken myself; yet, although he is considerably more than sixty, he looks and acts like a man on this side of fifty. I am older at heart than he is. Oh, dear! how very naïve he can be sometimes! As for Mrs. van Buren, you are out in your reckoning; but you women are always making plans for our happiness. Not a hair of my head—and I have a tolerable quantity—ever had an inkling of such a thought. No, thank you! one such experience is quite sufficient. A thousand pities that she is a woman, and you are one, too; but you are a good woman, my dear sister. Is the young widow good-looking? you ask. Well, you women might say no; but she has a clear complexion, is well-proportioned. Well, yes, she is good-looking; sometimes very good-looking. She is very talented, and writes well, both in prose and verse. The other is a strange creature; she provokes me sometimes past all bearing, because she takes absolutely no interest in anything; yet often she interests me as a psychological problem, and sometimes I pity her. The poor thing must be unhappy. Ah! who knows what fire once glowed in that now extinct crater! Such a thought saddens. Another victim to too much softness of heart. She is very lively—I mean Mrs. van Buren—and has wit and roguishness; but she is, unfortunately (this word



was scratched out), inaccessible as the Tarpeian rock, and armed at all points.

"I am studying the Pompeian paintings with Mr. van Walborch. I am writing now before my open window; before me lies the magnificent bay, the blue, sparkling sea, studded with rowing and sailing boats; to the right the Castel dell' Ovo, as you may see by the sketch I enclose; to the left the crescent of the city, and in the distance is the *molo*. Opposite, with his grand outlines, rises Vesuvius; he smokes and is overhung with clouds; he boils inwardly, but seeks to conceal it. They say an eruption is predicted.

"Good-bye, dear child,

"Yours,

"SIWART.

"P. S.—Write to me at Rome. Try and find out somehow who and what she is; her Christian name is Marciana. She is also Martiaal; that Van Buren was the Minister of State."

## CHAPTER IV.

NAPLES lay glittering in the morning sunshine. Van Walborch and his womankind had planned an excursion to Capri, and it was already an understood thing that

their friend the painter should accompany them. So they met on the quay and were rowed to the steamer, which was lying at a short distance from the shore. The little vessel was almost surrounded by swarms of swimming boys, who were screaming for coins wrapped in paper to be thrown to them. They gambolled like porpoises, scudding along the surface of the water, emitting sounds like the bray of a Triton's horn, as they sprang at the soldi tossed into the water. Quick as thought they caught the coin, extracted it from the paper, and stowed it away in their cheeks. Then they shouted, "*Senza carta !*" (without paper), and then they dived after the sinking coins.

The steamer put to sea, rocking on the heaving waves. Soon the noble Bay of Naples was seen unrolling itself and washing the feet of the mountains. The city gleamed white in the sunshine, and above uprose the red fort of St. Elmo. To the right was Vesuvius, his summit shrouded in grey clouds; at his feet, in the full sunlight, lay the little towns of Torre del Greco and Torre Annunziata. Cloud-shadows sailed over the mountains behind the town; above these lay thin, grey vapors, and higher still was the intense azure of the upper sky. The water itself was dark blue, like to *lapis lazuli*. The boats danced over it with white, three-cornered sails, and snow-white was the foam in the wake of the steamer.

A pleasant breeze was blowing, and the ship rose and fell on the swelling waves, swaying in regular undulations; while ever and anon, with graceful turns and

windings, the sharp prow reared up high from out of the water. It was glorious to stand on the forecastle and feel one's self borne along with nothing in sight but the wide, wide sea! In front, far as the eye could reach, snowy flakes of foam spangled the dark blue deep. In the shadowy distance loomed a sphinx-like figure, the Isle of Capri. Slowly it rose to view, and its outlines were soon discernible. At length it was reached, and the steamer sailed round it so as to steer toward the blue grotto. But on this occasion the waves ran high, and the wind was unfavorable, so that it was impossible to get into the little opening through which travellers usually pass in small boats to visit the curiously-lighted cavern. So our tourists had to steam back to the harbor of Capri. There they were at once beleaguered by donkey-drivers, flower-girls, and boys offering pieces of native coral. They made their way to one of the finely-situated hotels, and then climbed to the little town on the brow of the rock, and to the ruins of the palace where Tiberius, shunning Rome, ruled the empire and plunged into nameless debaucheries. A steep path, cut out of the living rock, winding between the mountain side and tall garden walls, is now and then enlivened by the presence of barefooted women, who bear heavy burdens on their heads; by a group of muttering suppliants performing their devotions; by a tourist on a donkey. From this path and from its summit the traveller may gaze his fill on the sinuosities of the rocky island.

"This is a place where I should like to live alone

for awhile," said Marciana. "What a lovely rock-idyll in the midst of the sea is this Capri!"

"I should not," said Ada; "it would soon get dreadfully tedious here, with nothing but that odious sea around, and every day a new set of tourists who come for the sole purpose of seeing that blue grotto, which is not blue after all."

"From that point of view any place may be tedious," said Mr. van Walborch. "True, the grotto is not blue, but people generally see it thus. In any case the mind must be blue as well, or else everything one looks upon is grey."

"Yes, I too should like to live and work here awhile," said Aisma. "But man is strangely constituted; if he has society he longs for solitude, and in solitude he longs for society. After all, I should not be able to live here alone for long."

"I did not think you were so particularly fond of company," said Marciana, roguishly.

"Of some people's company, certainly," said the painter, with a courteous gesture.

"Ah! that is the first compliment you have ever paid me; you must not do that; you have a mind above such things."

"Now I, in my turn, ought to regard that as a compliment."

They both laughed merrily, and then Aisma asked Marciana:

"But, seriously, should you like to live here, charming as it is?"

"I said for a while; no, not long. For my part I long to have people about me, to see life. If the mind has once been cultivated it needs food; and for that food it must look outside itself. The man that lives too much alone goes on consuming himself until he is consumed to nothing."

"Yet those monks of the Certosa looked anything but emaciated."

"Why, yes, they have fat in plenty; but have they any brains left?"

Thus they chatted upon their way, till their eyes were again arrested by the scenes of natural beauty or grandeur afforded by what Marciana had called the "lovely rock-idyll."

But a brief sojourn was all that circumstances allowed, though the genuinely Italian character of the place tempts the tourist to a longer stay. The bell of the steamer summoned the passengers to re-embark. Slowly it melted away in the distance, that huge cliff with its gay figures and its little houses clinging to it like shells to a rock; while above rose the lofty peak on which stood the villa of Tiberius.

As she had done in coming, Ada lay reclined on a sofa in the cabin, half-afraid of sea-sickness, half, really, affected by it. Van Walborch sat turning over the leaves of his Horace—his breviary, as he called it—till he found and revelled for the hundredth time in those grand rhythms which one cannot translate without breaking their music:

In oak or triple brass his breast was mailed,  
Who first committed to the ruthless deep  
His fragile skiff, nor only shrank and quailed  
To hear the headlong Afric fiercely sweep,  
With northern blasts to wrestle and to rave,  
Nor feared to face the tristful Hyades,  
And Notus, tyrant of the Adrian wave,  
That lifts or calms at will the restless sea.\*

But the waves began to swell higher, and the vessel swung to and fro in their roll; the wind, too, rose, and Van Walborch, despite his Horace, withdrew to the cabin, as the majority of his fellow-travellers had done before him.

Marciana remained on deck, revelling in keen delight of the sea. Wrapped in a red plaid, and accompanied by Aisma, she sought a sheltered corner close to the stern, and there they sat talking.

A day spent in the contemplation of the beauties of nature converts hours into years of intimacy. Those two were already accustomed to sustain a conversation without having recourse to trivial or every-day topics. The discourse always took a somewhat serious turn: ideas, experiences, speculations, which interflowed, or

\* Sir Theodore Martin's version.

*Illi robur et aes triplex  
Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci  
Commisit pelago ratem  
Primus.  
Nequicquam Deus abscondit  
Prudens oceano dissociabili  
Terras; si tamen impiae  
Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.*

conflicted, or harmonized. Each recognized in the other the presence of a superior mind. Aisma's views of life were often cutting and sarcastic; Marciana's lofty and commanding, with more of irony than of bitterness.

Marciana frequently took pleasure in throwing down a gauntlet. But he was circumspect, and their conversation at such times was like the play of two accomplished fencers, striving vainly to break through each other's guard. The young widow would often expressly offer an unguarded point, but Aisma did not suffer himself to be lured from the defensive. This stimulated her craving to make her mastery felt. Then she would resort to rapid turns and feints.

"I have observed already that you have no good opinion of women," she said, suddenly.

Aisma did not answer immediately, but cast a quick glance at her, and then said:

"Just look around—do you trust that sea? It is beautiful, certainly; but what a trifle there is between us and the abyss, and who knows what slight accident may plunge us into it!"

"That did not prevent you from coming on board, though," said she, with a musical laugh. "Did you know for a surety that this ship was to be depended on?"

"No; but we shall soon be in harbor, and then we are safe. I should not like to make my home on board of her."

"Do you think a true artist can ever marry?" she asked, with one of her rapid changes of front.

"Why?" returned he, to gain time for consideration.

"Because it seems to me he must always be in fear of dividing his soul; does not art demand it entire?"

"Certainly."

"Or would the soul be doubled if united with a kindred spirit?"

"That one would have to learn by experience."

"So you have not yet experienced it?"

"I have some reason to believe that an entirely kindred spirit is not to be found. No two people are alike."

"Then we come to the conclusion that this ideal is a hallucination?"

"In marriage we always see one that rules and one that is ruled, a masculine and feminine element in a spiritual sense."

Marciana laughed aloud and said:

"Ah! but the masculine element is often on the side of the woman, the feminine on that of the man."

"So much the worse. According to Eden's law the man is, after all, the first-born; he must be the actor."

"And the woman," she interrupted, warmly, "the sufferer, in a double sense."

"Oh, for the matter of that, it is just the question—or rather it is no question—who suffers most. I would rather be a woman, in that respect."

"Not in other respects, though, because you men think yourselves the superior."



"Why, to speak frankly, according to the old myth the man was the immediate creation—the woman a copy—second-hand."

"Now you are anything but flattering; but I am glad you do not pay hackneyed compliments. I might answer in my turn that the second edition is always better than the first. But look here, from this same myth we might also infer the absolute oneness of the two."

"And the immediate offspring of that oneness was—fratricide!"

"A marriage between persons too closely related produces weakly children—that is a well-known fact. Is it possible that people too much alike are not well matched, and may it not be so with souls?"

"Perhaps—probably; but man will have to seek long ere he finds something harmonious and yet distinct, a harmony of two differences."

"Yes," said Marciana, thoughtfully, "there lies the danger: a harmony gained by sacrifice or denial on one side means nothing, and if it did, one cannot be absorbed in another's being without losing one's self."

Silence followed. At length they, too, were overcome by that dreaminess with which the monotony of the sea, notwithstanding its beauty, is apt to oppress us, and they sat silent, side by side. As the broad current of the strong wind, the long succession of clouds drifting through the sky, the foam-crested waves, agitated though not tempestuous, so were their secret souls.

Both felt the magnetism impelling them to each

other; both struggled against it. Through the minds of both were sweeping clouds from the stormy past, which cast corresponding shadows over their hearts; the sunny wishes and meteor-like dreams of youth, gloomy disillusion and struggle, resignation and wrath. She thought of her early ideals, and how they had been wrecked, of temporary defeat at the hands of the commonplace, of revolt, of conflict, of the decision that brings repose—repose hard-won by stern self-mastery, the suppression of idle longings. She thought also of the resolute maintenance of her own individuality by means of a justifiable egotism, of an independent existence gained by cutting off every access to tenderness, on her will bent on extorting pleasure from life by seeking happiness in herself alone, arming herself with a laugh against the world and her own heart.

On his horizon there also loomed a *fata morgana*; he, too, had had his ideals, a tender attachment, a bitter deception, black clouds darkening a future he had fancied full of sunshine, a conflict between love and hate, self-surrender and sullen retreat. He too thought of self-possession obtained by hard, self-isolation, by the suppression of emotion, with disdain as the weapon by which to hold his own against the world.

And so they drifted on the billows like two halcyons: the one calm because she turned everything into jest, the other calm through disdain—at least so they fancied—in the bosom of the heaving sea of life.

They started from their reverie when the boat rode at anchor in the bay, and ordinary life once more pressed

its claims upon them. By a mutual impulse they looked at each other; yet, while their eyes thus obeyed the attraction, their hands cut off the mysterious current, and in both arose the thought, "No, you shall not draw me out of myself to expose me to a new disillusion." "No, you shall not make me stoop."

But owing to the power of dissimulation inherent in human nature, nothing of this was perceptible, and when they parted, Marciana held out her hand with a cheery laugh, and Aisma accepted it with a friendly smile.

"But yet you shall not make me stoop." Neither of them went so far as to put this declaration into words, but any one permitted a glimpse into their hearts might have read it there; and, nevertheless, who knows whether a clearer vision might not have detected something lying deeper—something yet unborn!

## CHAPTER V.

AISMA had been taken up so cordially by his new acquaintances, that he was glad to join their circle daily. Although he had resolved to paint very industriously while at Naples, he was kept from so doing in spite of himself. Without knowing how it came about, his taciturnity gave place to communicativeness; and instead of his seeking to wrap himself up in his art, social life exercised its influence upon him. Gay, sunny, seemingly lazy Naples had its effect on him as it has on

others, although the animating society in which he found himself so unexpectedly may have been the more powerful factor. The refined yet frank tone that pervaded it, Van Walborch's stores of knowledge, the treasures of Marciana's mind, the gentle melancholy of Ada, the goodness of heart and fortitude of the sorely afflicted Salviati—all these things worked together upon Aisma's mind. Not that he would have confessed this—not even to himself. Does not the wounded heart part reluctantly with its sorrows?—that poor human heart which cherishes its enemy, and would be loth to slay him! It is no true psychology that regards this as an infallible token of weakness. Very often it is just the strong nature that dallies with this foe, until he dies his own natural death. The foe was not yet dead, but he had received a severe wound. At least Aisma did what a short time before was the last thing he would have thought of—he yielded to the influence of social life. And this life humanizes us, especially if it be not commonplace. So he walked with the ladies in the Villa Nazionale, loitered past the shops, and amused himself with observing low life in bustling Naples.

There is a vast difference of character between Northern and Southern Italy. Figuratively speaking, there lies between them a portion of the Mediterranean Sea; it is the difference between Latium and Hellas. The best idea we can form of the ancient Greeks is probably through a study of the Neapolitans. All the southern part of Italy, peopled by Greeks at a very early period, has unquestionably retained much of their

character. This observation was made by Van Walborch, and hence arose frequent discussions between him and Aisma concerning the relations of Greek and Roman art. As an artist Aisma was too fully persuaded of the infinite superiority of the Greeks, not to be uncompromisingly Hellenic. When it came to a question of comparison, Van Walborch, to whom it was a question of theory, not of practice, was therefore more objective. He defended the Romans and their art, and contended that it possessed a character peculiar to itself and original in its kind.

"Of course I do not deny the incomparable superiority of Greek art; to it alone we must turn to find the beautiful in its highest development," he said; "but I cannot endure to hear Roman art and letters treated so contemptuously, as if the Romans had no natural gifts, and every production of theirs was a mere copy. This is untrue. They formed themselves in the Greek school, as we have formed ourselves in that of the Greeks, the Romans, and others. And there is one fact that must not be so utterly overlooked: the Roman culture is more Western, and consequently comes nearer to us. It has served as a medium to interpret the Greek, and such it must remain. We moderns cannot dispense with this stepping-stone; the Hellenic temple stands far too high to be reached at a single stride."

"That is all very well," said Aisma: "I too esteem the Roman world very highly, only we must always admit the fact that there is no higher art than the Hellenic."

"Granted; but do you think we, with our views of duty, purity, and gravity, could ever have felt ourselves quite at home in Athens? The life must doubtless have resembled that of modern Naples; the spirit lively, mobile, sparkling, but with a ready bent towards mockery and passion; the people with few wants, good-natured in their waggersy, but yet with a certain trickishness that we in our seriousness would call deceit."

"I feel myself more at home in Rome," said Marciana.

"Ah!" said Ada, "our own Dutch comfort is a long way better."

Such was the frequent course of their conversation. In how far either was right or wrong in opinions, we do not attempt to decide. It is certain that the South has a character peculiar to itself, which is very strongly marked in Naples. What an uproar! what heat, stench, filth! what a glow of sunshine! Half-naked, nay, frequently quite naked, children; louts sleeping on dirt-heaps; carts and carriages with galloping horses; well-dressed people and people in dirt and rags — all jumbled up together. Everything is carried on in the streets — eating, sleeping, cooking, relieving the children from the insects whose leap Aristophanes makes his caricature-Socrates calculate, washing down horses, and drying clothes. Along the Lucia there is fish everywhere — tables loaded with it and with shell-fish, the disgusting *frutti di mare*, which they use for food: even down to the creatures with whose shells we strew our garden paths. And along with all this, that bay, Vesuvius, the

hot sun, those picturesque costumes — it is a medley of uproar, stench, squalor, and beauty.

And then — a characteristic which amazes us — that peculiar notion of honesty! You laughingly reduce a bill to a quarter its amount: the fellow shrugs his shoulders, laughs too, and says “*È!*” A coachman demands three times his proper fare: as if talking to a child, you say to him, with a smile, “Ho, ho, my man! I say, so-and-so will do as well, won’t it?” Then his eyes sparkle, he laughs — he has missed his mark, but he is amused to see that you are more astute than he, and he calls you *eccellenza!* Next time you are looking for a cab he bears you no malice: he is glad to have you for a customer, for, after all is said and done, you have paid him more than his due.

There are certain drawbacks inseparable from this easy-going way of looking at things; but, on the other hand, it is not to be denied that the naïve and light-hearted conception of life, of which this and similar emanations form the shadow side, has its good side as well. There is a possibility of considering things too deeply, and with too uniform a seriousness.

So it came about that, wandering through Naples, Aisma and the two ladies caught the contagion of the careless light-heartedness around them. Even Ada brightened up a little. Aisma felt his interest in her increase. Her fragile frame, her refined bearing, added to the tinge of melancholy imparted by the futility of her life, deepened interest into sympathy. “Is it too late for any improvement to be effected here?” he thought within

himself. There was a certain softness about her — too much, it must be owned — but yet a softness which has its attractions too. He knew not how and in what respects, but Mrs. van Buren struck him as being different from what she had been at first. She was gay and friendly, but it seemed that she was less frank, or rather, though she was frank enough, yet there was an invisible line she would not suffer to be overstepped. There was no overt act by which this could be proved, and yet it made itself distinctly felt. Feminine art is very proficient and dexterous in such matters. There is often something variable in women of which a man can form no conception, because his organism is less delicate and sensitive. However this may be, and whether Aisma was deceiving himself or not, he now found in Ada's softness a loveliness that he sometimes felt lacking in Marciana's strength.

## CHAPTER VI.

VAN WALBORCH loved the good old English and Dutch custom of not living constantly in public, and preserving something of home life even when on a journey. Therefore the evening generally found them enjoying the social pleasures of the tea-table, after which they would talk, or read, or have some music.

Just now Marciana was sitting by the open window



writing, but her thoughts did not seem to flow freely ; at least, her chief occupation seemed to be gazing out at the bay and Vesuvius, while only at intervals she would hastily jot down a line. In the meantime the ever-contented Salviati, with his crooked figure, sat on a low stool near the other window humming Neapolitan tunes, or trying to entertain Ada, who was reclining languidly in an easy-chair. Now and then Marciana would glance from the landscape into the room, where her uncle and Aisma were looking at photographs, quite absorbed in the wall-pictures of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

"So much is certain," said Van Walborch ; " they must henceforth be regarded from quite a different point of view. They have always been contemplated from an archæological standpoint ; at length they must be considered as works of art."

"Certainly," said Aisma, "one may learn a profusion of interesting details from them ; but their chief importance lies in the help they afford to our knowledge of antique methods of drawing and painting. Looked at from this point of view, they have come to me as a revelation, and I have learned a great deal from them. But in studying them, people have not drawn the proper distinction between the work of the skilled artisan and the work of the artist ; hence the best things have been little observed as yet."

"True ; but do not draw too sharp a distinction between the handicraft and the art of antiquity. Every craft was artistic and every art was a craft. An artist,

as a man of position and culture, was unknown to the Greeks and Romans. Every trade, even that of the sculptor and painter, was given over to a lower class. Remember what Plutarch wrote: 'No young man, when he sees the Zeus at Pisa, desires therefore to become a Phidias, nor even an Archilochos, or a Philetas, however much he may enjoy their poems.' There are hundreds of such examples."

"Eh?" said Marciana, looking up from her papers; "what is that? Is that an old Greek idea, or the offspring of after times?"

"I am sorry, my dear, but it is Greek, and that too of the best period. It is Roman as well. Valerius Maximus calls painting a dirty trade."

"Then I am quite at a loss to understand that universal feeling for beauty which so thoroughly permeated their daily life, that fervent enthusiasm for everything beautiful. To our ideas an artist is looked up to the more he is a man of culture, the more his art does not live exclusively in his figures."

"Take care; those are modern ideas," said Van Walborch. "We have elevated the artist, but art has sunk. And it is logical, just because beauty was universal and spontaneous, it did not require to be considered as something separate and peculiar. With us, for the most part, it is only the brothers of the craft that feel and cultivate the beautiful. With the ancients it was universal, unconscious even, and it was the artist who gave it expression. It was a necessity of their nature to produce things of beauty; with us it is a conscious

study and an art. So they honored the work of art, but thought more lightly of the artist."

"And yet," said Marciana, "Phidias was the friend of Pericles."

"Yes, there were exceptions, of course; but I spoke of the rule. The chief point, then, was whether a man sought to earn his bread by art; if not, it was quite another thing. But," said Van Walborch, arranging his photographs, "there is certainly a difference between the manufactured productions and the artistic; for the rest we must recollect that this is decorative art, adapted to a particular place."

"And we can recognize a very perceptible difference, both in spirit and treatment," said Aisma. "There are some subjects slightly sketched with the pencil, others elaborately finished; nay, we may detect the peculiar individuality and even the hand of the painter."

After the maid-servant had brought lights, with a "*felicissima notte*," Van Walborch sought out some pictures from amid the photographs on the table.

"Look here," he said, "help me to something like a clear view, you, master of the pencil; there is so much that is quite foreign to our modern ideas of art."

"We are accustomed," said the painter, "to richer tone and color, to more fulness of detail; but the summary method employed in the Pompeian pictures has a character of its own. See here, Medea with her two boys—and that other Medea, standing alone, brooding over the mortal stroke—here, Zeus and Hera. . . ."

"Zeus with an *intaglio* ring on his finger," said Ada, in scornful surprise.

"Why yes," said Aisma, somewhat querulously; "such trifles are of no consequence. Here Achilles carrying off Briseis, there Perseus and Andromeda. This Iphigenia is worth nothing—mere decorative work. Well, almost all these large mythological pictures are superficial, thin and flat in painting, sometimes even slovenly in draughtsmanship. But the fact remains; they served for decorative purposes, to brighten up the walls, and just the particular wall from which they were inseparable. Ancient art always entered far less into detail, contented itself with grand, broad lines. But, however summary and even negligent the treatment, we cannot fail to see in all these works that the artists have been nurtured on great examples. It is with them as with painted vases: the would-be connoisseur can point out many faults; but one who is really at home in the subject—and these vases were never studied as works of art, and for their art-qualities alone—Flaxman, for instance, he knew—well, one who sees with understanding is amazed at the universal dissemination of art-training. Those artists were thoroughly acquainted with the chief contours of the human figure, and though they fall short in details, sometimes sinning against knowledge by reason of haste, they drew their figures with astonishing accuracy of proportion, and movement, with a firm hand, and invariably with an eye to the beauty and distinctness of the silhouette. And this is just what we observe here. You must not look at the details of eyes,

mouth, fingers, but look at the rendering of the entire figure; and you will almost always find that the silhouette, the outline of the whole, is beautiful. But there are great differences too; this, this, and that, are slovenly. But look at this Bacchus with the Satyr—that is skilfully drawn; the head touched with whitish red, the bay-wreath indicated lightly; the eyes, nose, mouth, though painted in with but one color, purplish brown, yet reveal the whole as the work of an artist, not of a journeyman house-painter. Look at the Chiron, too, who is teaching Achilles to play the lyre, by far the best of the large pictures, splendidly drawn, with a warm, even Giorgione-like, yellow tone; again the hand of an artist. But if you want to see a piece of admirable execution, just look at this little figure I have copied—the Andromeda by the rock. Don't ask if that hand is irreproachable, but look at the modelling and the curve of the outlines. What skill! See how it seems as though delicately breathed upon the wall. The carnation flesh tints, the soft, yellow robe—how much taste is here displayed in a few touches! And that Nereid on a sea-panther, olive carnations with Da Vinci-like dappled shadows, and striking points of light on the forearm and hip. Let no one say, after that, that they knew no *chiaro-oscuro*."

"Have these things been before our eyes for a hundred years," said Marciana, "and has no one observed all this?"

"Why," said Aisma, shrugging his shoulders, "people are always fettered to a system; they look at things in the way their predecessors told them to look, they do

not see with their own eyes. In every museum most people overlook the best that is to be seen."

Van Walborch took a lively interest in this dialogue, nodding his head approvingly at times and rubbing his hands with satisfaction.

"Do you know how they are painted?" he asked; "it cannot be all fresco?"

"Partly, but not wholly; it is sometimes done *al fresco* on the wall. My opinion is that some have been painted on the rough wall, while others show clearly that they have been done on smooth stucco, otherwise they would not look as if they were enamelled, nor would the touches stand out so well. The artists usually went to work in this way: first, a local color; secondly, a darker hue of the same color, to form the shade; thirdly, the same color, lighter, to form the lights. The contrasts were always distinct, not shaded off with half-tints; the colors bright, but yet rather subdued. Do you remember the ornaments I pointed out to you—a green ground with slender tendrils and delicate foliage and fruits of pale yellowish green, with a bird sitting on a bough? That is the work of a master, as light and firm as if it were Japanese."

"What! Japanese? Are we expected to call that beautiful too?" called out Ada in the distance.

"Beautiful? masterly! Their flowers and animals are masterly. Just look at Mrs. van Buren's fan, but *look*, look attentively, observe, could anything be firmer, or more graceful, more boldly drawn?"

Marciana opened her fan and examined it. Then

she looked at Aisma: "That man is always suggesting new views to me," she thought; "and he is right; I did not see it until now."

"Now look at these flowers and twigs and birds, how firm and spirited the drawing. Sometimes they go even further. Do you remember in one of the halls a sparrow on a bough, grey-green, downy?—that is a masterpiece."

"Oh, and my lovely dancing girls!" said Van Walborch; "how light and graceful their action, how transparent and gauzy their very drapery!"

"And the girl with an amphora! one, two, three strokes, and there she stands. At least so it seems, for, after all, these figures are more elaborately worked out; they are painted quite in our modern way."

"There is one thing I should like to know," said Van Walborch: "are these colors so much faded, or have they always been quiet and subdued?"

"The ancients never used many colors, and they did not blend tints to any extent. Although somewhat subdued they are often fresh, and never dirty. In that respect also they possessed a degree of positiveness. The colors must have been rather brighter originally, but yet not gaudy or hard; everything was mellow and harmonious, while all copyists make them crude and glaring."

"That is exactly the opinion I had formed for myself; and do you know what has confirmed it?"

"What?"

"The mosaics. These are of materials that never

fade, and yet they display the same harmonies, the same combinations of bright and still somewhat subdued colors."

"Just so. You are perfectly right and have observed well."

The soft tones of Salviati's guitar interrupted the conversation of the two enthusiasts. Marciana and Ada sang a few of the Heine-Schumann songs, and then the party separated.

When Marciana reached her own apartment she went to the open window to inhale the cool evening air. Many and agitated were her thoughts; she was filled with struggling sensations.

She gave fresh water to the roses in the vase, breathed their fragrance for a while, and then placed them outside the window, which she closed. Then she opened her portfolio, and poured out her thoughts on paper.

Night unfolds her dusky veil,  
And on high the tranquil moon,  
Scarce full-orbed, sails calm and bright;  
Venus' star grows faint and pale  
In Diana's silver light.  
Thou, Vesuvius, subdue  
The harsh splendor of thy hue;  
That thy crest of cloud may grow  
Fairer from the softer glow.  
Soon the city shall be lying  
In a silence most profound,  
But upon the breezes sighing  
Yet is borne a parting sound—  
Faint, and far, a murmured din,  
Mixed with music's dulcet notes,



The last song of a mandolin  
O'er the drowsy town that floats,  
And the orange-blossoms sigh  
Forth their vespers fragrantly ;  
All the growths of living green  
Hail great Nature as their queen. . . .  
Peace, O Peace ! O sink to rest,  
Wild pulse, a-throb within my breast !  
Wild thoughts that lurk, ye shall not fright  
My soul which is at peace to-night.

## CHAPTER VII.

MR. VAN WALBORCH and his party had returned to Rome, where they occupied apartments in the Piazza di Spagna. Ada found lodgings in a *pension*, one of those secular cloisters intended for the use of ladies travelling alone ; and Salviati hobbled up to his little retreat near the roof of a ruined palace.

Aisma had resolved to spend a few days more in studying Pompeii. He went thither by rail. "Station Pompeii." How strange it sounds ! "Pompeii ! Pompeii !" shout the guards, who fling open the doors of the railway compartments exactly as if they were calling out some obscure Dutch village. But scarcely have we reached the high walls with their thousands of purple-flowered mesembryanthemums, and passed through the Porta della Marina, than the new world makes place for the old.

Impressive indeed is the first aspect, as the feet of

the living press the very pavement trodden by those who died so many years ago. Marvellous city! from whose houses all the upper stories have, as it were, been mown away by the scythe of Time, and now lie open to wind and weather, so that the blue sky shines down into every house. Aisma set himself to enter thoroughly into the ancient life of the town. What could be gained from the study of books and monuments he had already assimilated, but he wished to conjure up before his imagination the very life of the men of old—to walk, sleep, dream, eat, within the very walls where these Romans lived; tread the very blocks of lava on which their feet or the soles of their shoes had trodden, in which their carriage-wheels had left their tracks; give himself up to meditation beside the very impluvium where they were wont to sit enjoying the fresh air and social chat; rest his sketch-book on the foot of the very white marble table round which they had gathered; study and copy with the very figures looking down upon him from the wall, paintings that had looked down upon the living eighteen centuries ago. He wandered through the streets, over the old stepping-stones, past the little shops, in the gardens once gay with flowers, read their various inscriptions—appeals to electors, squibs scratched on the wall by some Pompeian street urchin, effusions of some love-lorn swain. As often as he noted the constantly recurring name Holconius, he thought with a smile of Marciana's remark, "That Holconius is the Marquis of Carabas, or, if you will, the Torlonia of Pompeii." In the Casa della Fontana Piccola he painted

carefully the lovely little fountain with its many-colored mosaics and shells. Without the gate, in the street of tombs, he drew a sunny study of the semicircular seat, with its sculptured arms, on which he meant to place some reclining figures, which, when worked out, would make a lovely picture. Then he would sit for hours in one of the streets, while his imagination crowded it with figures of saunterers and flower-girls, with open shops and counters where business was being carried on.

Once he seated himself in the inn, whose walls display some coarse paintings in which the guests and their talk have been preserved, as it were, photographically. There sat two of the customers dicing :

"I win," says the one.

"Not you," says the other.

"Three."

"Two."

"Won!"

But then they fell a-quarrelling, as we see in a second scene.

"No, not two."

"Mine."

"Three."

"For me."

"You liar! it was mine."

Again we see a couple of figures; they come to blows, but the host interferes, turns them out, and calls after them, "Off with you; go and fight somewhere else!"

With his power of identifying himself with the life

of antiquity Aisma made a spirited sketch out of this scene of low life.

On one of his strolls he examined and drew carefully all manner of little curiosities that he found in the Regio VI., Via Nona. There he was struck by an inscription on the wall: *Odero se potero; se non, invitus amabo.* (Hate, that will I, if I can; if not, love her, despite myself.)

It was one of those outpourings of love-melancholy often met with on these walls. Aisma smiled at the extraordinary fate that had preserved a sigh so fleeting for eighteen hundred years, but the line kept ringing in his ears, and involuntarily his thoughts travelled back to the beautiful woman in whom he had come to feel such interest, and who, ever and anon, hovered before his mind's eye like a Pompeian figure on the wall. "*Odero, se potero*—hate; that is too strong; there is no reason for that; but"—thus he went on translating to suit his own sentiments, remaining unmoved—"se potero: if I can—why should he not if he will it?—se non: if not—then love after all? Is that power so irresistible then? Why, yes, for the inexperienced; but if once a fellow has got hardened in struggle, halt!"

And he began to copy, carefully and minutely, the stones of a mosaic floor, to observe their various shapes, regular, yet with a certain artistic freedom which removed every shadow of mathematical or mechanical stiffness.

At last, enriched with numbers of studies and designs, full of lively impressions of the ancient town, he went

direct to Rome. His lodgings were close to the Trinità de' Monti, in the Via Sistina: one room was fitted up as a studio.

On the first day, before he had settled to anything, while looking at some of his earlier studies and at a picture of Helen which he had begun, he became aware that a new light had broken in upon him; he had arrived at a clearer insight. He was dissatisfied with what he had done, and resolved to make some material alterations in his work. In some parts it was too brown, too heavy; the sun of Naples and the art of antique masters had shone into his soul. The following day he set to work. According to his new ideas he had been treating his subject with too great a straining after effect—a notion of his youth which he had now abandoned. Rembrandt and so many others have accomplished great things by this means; but every period, every subject, every individual has a distinct character, and this character has its own peculiar requirements.

He knew the value of that method which seeks and secures unity of effect by concentrating the light on one chief point, and subduing all around to a gradually deepening twilight, thus softening the colors by means of tone. But his own was different. He sought to preserve unity of effect along with clear color and full illumination. His aim was to sacrifice no accessory, but to render everything in full detail and in clear daylight—a task that offered no small difficulty. More resolutely than ever did he nerve himself to accomplish this, for in this lay his strength and his originality. And

so he let the full daylight pour into his picture, and cleared the transparent shadows and reflections.

He smiled to think of what would be said of this by his fellow-artists, who would hear nothing in favor of this fulness of detail, while some of the juniors inveighed against noble draughtsmanship for which they were in the habit of substituting *chic*. "They will shake their heads," said he to himself; "but just let them come here for a bit, and they will learn to see differently."

This work absorbed Aisma's thoughts so completely for some days that it did not occur to him to pay a visit to Mr. van Walborch, till one afternoon, when he sought much needed relaxation in a stroll on the Monte Pincio, he suddenly descried the old gentleman and his niece among the crowd. Van Walborch was waving his white sunshade to attract the painter's attention. He was cordially greeted by both.

"Is it long since you came back to Rome?" asked Mrs. van Buren.

"About five or six days."

"Oh; did you not know our address?"

The words seemed to convey a mild reproach. Aisma felt this, and hastened to explain that he had been quite wrapped up in his picture.

"May we come some day and see it?" asked Van Walborch.

"Certainly; but there is little to be seen as yet. I have done it all over again, made it quite different — the influence of Pompeii," he added, laughingly.

Van Walborch smiled too, with a gesture which

seemed to say : " Well, that does not surprise me in the least."

" Are you still working at Helen ?" asked Marciana.

" Yes ; one does not so easily get rid of a woman like that."

" Wherein does her attraction lie ?" said Marciana, lifting her eyes to Aisma, while her whole face sparkled with roguish complacency and feminine self-consciousness.

" Oh," said Aisma, with a mock sigh, " that is just what we don't exactly know how to define, though we feel it well enough — and we can express it in art."

" What is your conception of her ? Is she dark or fair, graceful or stately ?"

" I had made her merely graceful, but that will not do. She must be vigorous, not merely pretty, but full of character and style."

" Do you think the characteristic higher than the beautiful ?"

" If you put it in that way I cannot answer yes. The beautiful is the highest, but it must have character and style ; the beautiful is not pretty."

" Would mere beauty have exercised that overpowering influence we observe everywhere as soon as Helen appears on the scene ?"

" That is just what I was thinking of. It is not enough for me to represent Helen as a beautiful woman ; there are so many beautiful women. She must have something particular, something demoniac, something that fascinates ; we know not why. That is what some

women have, even without the highest beauty, even with little irregularities of form and feature which we should not admire in others, but which, nevertheless, we should not like to have altered, which, in fact, contribute to make up the mysterious attraction. I am looking for such a model, or a least for something that I can idealize into such a one."

Talking thus they had wandered away from the music on the Pincio, and entered an alley where Van Walborch had seated himself on a bench. Marciana remained standing before him. She looked beautiful just then, and there was about her that peculiar something which Aisma had just been trying to put into words. When his eye fell upon her he started as if he had received an electric shock. He gazed at her fixedly. There was a radiance in her face like that on an agate-rose in the sunshine. Her hair gleamed like gold, her northern fairness was framed in lines so severely regular that they resembled those of the Roman empresses. The delicate yellowish hue of her dress was relieved by black lace, and by a magnificent yellow rose that she wore in her bosom. Her proud, lissom, yet powerful figure stamped itself on his memory.

When he resumed his work the following morning his Helen was entirely transformed.

His satisfaction with his work put him into high spirits; and when he went out he bought some costly roses in the Via dei Condotti and handed them in at the Piazza di Spagna with a card requesting permission to drop in at tea-time.



"If I could only get her for a model!" thought he.

## CHAPTER VIII.

VAN WALBORCH's sitting-room was the centre where a good many people often gathered of an evening. One day in the week at least a large number of visitors might generally be found there, inhabitants of Rome, or strangers from various countries.

Van Walborch was a man of the world; in the domestic circle he was simple, and loved to study; in a small circle of congenial friends he liked to sound the depths of a literary or artistic subject without fear of arrogating to himself a discourteously large share of the conversation, when he let loose the copious stream of his reading and his ideas; but when his guests were numerous he left them to lead the conversation. Marciana had learned this courteous custom; she did the honors of the drawing-room without seeming to be the central figure there. When she had addressed a few words to each of her guests she seated herself on a sofa and retired for a little behind her fan. Aisma, seeing her alone, went up to her. She drew in her skirts a little and moved slightly, thus giving him mimetic permission to seat himself beside her.

"Well," she said, with a smile, "you see you are no stranger. Your pictures have attracted attention here as well as at home."

"Oh, I have made a lot of new acquaintances already. But it is very confusing to be introduced to so many people one after another, and I have such a bad memory for names. Do tell me once more who is that young man with the black moustache and the remarkably brilliant eyes."

"That? that is Askol. Don't you know his works? He is well acquainted with your pictures. He is our sculptor, a man of talent, of great talent. He is an American, but has lived several years in Rome. You must make his acquaintance; we like him much. He is an artist to the core."

"And who is that tall, gaunt ecclesiastic your uncle's talking to?"

"That? Why are you looking at him in such amazement?"

"Amazement indeed! just fancy — I must tell you all about it. A day or two ago I was in the Maria Sopra Minerva, and just when I was going out of the door I turned — for I wanted to have another look at the monument of the Lucciae, whose pure Renaissance style impressed me the more forcibly because of the baroque character of many of the other decorations — there, in a corner by the door, I found a grey-haired, very respectable-looking priest, who came up to me and muttered something. I fancied I caught his meaning, but did not dare to believe my ears, when he repeated his request, and — only guess — he asked me to give him money for a pair of new shoes! I was so ashamed that, with a polite shrug of the shoulders as if I had

not understood him, I made off as fast as I could. And that is he!"

Marciana quite forgot her sedateness, and from her sweet lips rippled a stream of unrestrained laughter.

"*Dio mio!* That poor Pecchi! Yes, that is something quite new to you; but you must not be astonished at such a thing here. We will look at his shoes by-and-by; perhaps he has been more successful with somebody else. Oh, they don't shrink from things of that sort, those poor priests. He is teaching me Italian. I can read it, but I want to learn the colloquial expressions. *Per Crispino!* look, he has new shoes on. He has certainly offered up a petition to the patron saint of shoemakers."

"Hush!" said Aisma; "don't attract notice by laughing; rather tell me some particulars about the visitors here. Do tell me how it comes that Miss Ada has grown so peculiar, so cold."

"Alas! that is a tragedy; we must not make a joke of that," she said, with sudden gravity: "no, I shall tell you about that at a better opportunity."

"And Salviati?"

"Well, that is a tragedy too; but I can tell you about him in a very few words. Salviati was a tall, handsome young man, as you may still see by his head, till an illness stretched him on a sick-bed. He recovered, but rose from his couch the afflicted creature you see, quite crooked, and deprived of the use of his lower limbs. Oh, he is a worthy fellow; every one tries to

make life pleasanter to him; and, notwithstanding his hard fate, there is not a shadow of bitterness or discontent about him—he is always cheerful; yet it is remarkable. Just think of it, to have been young and handsome, and then thus; you must respect him and help him. He works manfully for his living by giving music lessons and writing criticisms."

Indeed it would have done any one's heart good to see how the guests gathered round the little figure hopping about on crutches, how every one, the ladies included, were helpful and tender to him.

"Come," said Marciana, "I am going to invite Salviati to sit beside me for a bit. We must be as kind to him as we can, to make up for his sufferings. Do you go and talk with Ada a little; she too needs cheering."

So saying, she shut her fan and rose, while Aisma looked after her admiringly as she conducted Salviati to the sofa. He then went up to Ada, who was sitting at a table in the corner of the room listlessly looking at photographs.

Marciana drew a low easy-chair close to the sofa and placed Salviati in it. She asked him if he would teach her *Morra*—that ancient, still popular Italian game, with its thrusting forth and counting of fingers. Merrily rang their laughter, and Salviati's comical exclamations at her repeated failures. Soon quite a circle had gathered round them to hear the pleasantries of the lively Italian.

Aisma soon perceived that when the mist of melan-

choly that hung over Ada could be lifted even a little, she displayed much refinement and culture. As if from the ashes of a ruined and buried Pompeii (Aisma felt himself making this comparison involuntarily) there rose and revived in her the hidden soul of poetry, a wealth of ideas and images in the half-faded, tender hues of the Pompeian pictures, soft and ethereal as these.

For upwards of four years she had travelled in Italy and Switzerland, sometimes alone, sometimes in the company of other such ladies, of whom there is no lack in either country, who on account of domestic troubles or social difficulties are wasting their years in foreign lands, wandering about from *pension* to *pension*. Sometimes they will form themselves into families, and these *pensions* are then cities of refuge for unmarried women, most of whom deal freely in cant and *ennui*, for want of some useful occupation to employ their minds.

"Oh, those are places of torture!" said Ada; "the rooms are close, the passages and stone stairs are dirty, and smell of petroleum and onions; one lives in kennels of rooms furnished with faded finery and tin-kettle pianos on which English devotees strum pious tunes."

"Do you find nothing in Rome to divert your mind?"

"Oh, the houses here are dirty too: in the Roman kitchens I see servant girls asleep by the kitchen range, and their elaborately-dressed heads lying among the charcoal ashes. With such begrimed faces they bring your letters upstairs."

"Did not you find things better in Florence then?"

"Florence! the less said about Florence the better; I lived there in a narrow street full of filthy smells and the dissonant cries of newspaper boys; I wandered through the museums without understanding anything about art, and all those saints and madonnas—and where I lived were nothing but those saintly English ladies. Once I met some 'emancipated women,' that is, worse; they are rough, not well-bred, not so very bad at heart some of them, but unwomanly, nothing gentle, nothing prepossessing about them. They knew a great many things, but that was all."

"So the refining influence of art was wanting?"

"Art—I don't know—how does one get to know art? I understand too little about all that art."

"I don't mean works of art, but the æsthetic sense that results in refinement of mind and manners. You are no stranger to that, and, moreover, you are fond of music and poetry."

"When I was a child," she said—for that was the point to which her thoughts constantly reverted—"I used to pray, 'Dear Lord, give me my whole life long a little garden to rear flowers in, a little house of my own with a puss, and a piano to sing my Mendelssohns to,' but my prayer has not been heard. I began to travel, that I might breathe a freer air and find a wider sphere, but—I found that nowhere."

Aisma had been struck more than once with Ada's power of observation, and her faculty of reproducing

what she saw with a few — often poetical — touches. He suddenly said :

“ Why don't you try to work out your trouble by regarding it objectively? Why don't you write?”

“ Why should I put my experiences on paper? There is nothing new in the history of a wasted life. There are more than enough female scribblers, and besides, I have no talent that way. In my youth I was kept starving for sunshine and good books; I read Byron and Schiller in secret, and doted. . .”

“ And no solid, scientific knowledge along with that? All art, and the love of art as well, must be sustained by a strong admixture of concrete fact.”

“ Oh, no; solid knowledge of every sort was forbidden to me. I was jealously guarded from hearing scientific criticism; but that came of itself too. I heard just enough of it to destroy the old views, not enough to construct something new. That is the common misery of those who, born with a free, inquiring spirit, are brought up within the pale of an ancient despotism. Such are ever doomed to destruction. Marciana, too, is always urging me to find something to do.”

“ Oh, if she would help you! What a powerful mind, what splendid talents!”

Meanwhile Askol, the sculptor, was in animated discourse with Marciana. His eye now fell on Aisma, and he said :

“ Pray introduce me to him. I feel a great interest in him, and I am an enthusiastic admirer of his pictures. Never has the ancient world been so fully realized by

any painter as in those paintings of his that I have seen. We are accustomed to a huge amount of conventionality and false art in the rendering of the antique. I am utterly amazed at his familiarity with everything about it, down to the most insignificant detail. In his art the antique has become real life. His ancients are antique, and yet they live, born again in a modern form."

Marciana gladly assented to his request.

"Yes, he is a remarkable man; I myself have had some such feeling as you express now."

She led him up to the painter.

"Gentlemen," she said, "it would be a pleasure to me and a benefit to art if you were to know each other well."

With this she left them together.

They were soon at home with each other. Askol was a man free from reserve, who always spoke his mind without fear or favor. He was so much accustomed to mould clay and to hew marble that he dealt with his fellow-men in the same vigorous and easy style.

Aisma, too, was decided and absolute in his views of art. Askol was a conscientious workman, and Aisma also was exact and scrupulous in his painting. Both characters, therefore, soon declared themselves without any tedious prelude, and — allowing for the very distinct individuality of each — there were a good many points of agreement between them. Aisma promised the sculptor to visit him soon at his studio.

While this talk was going on a sudden and curious



diversion was effected. A girl, dressed in the costume of ancient Greece, walked into the room bearing a salver filled with cakes and fruit, with which she served the assembled guests. The surprise had been planned by Marciana, who had dressed up her maid for the occasion. A long and limp robe of delicate color hung from her shoulders in thin, soft folds, and was fastened above the arms with a clasp; over the belt that bound the short waist fell the folds of the peplos. Round her neck she wore a chain composed of Greek coins, and in her jetty tresses were twined two bands of lilac ribbons. From under the hem of the robe peeped slashed shoes of yellow kid.

This beautiful Roman girl in her Greek array caused a joyous commotion and universal merriment, and Askol whispered to Marciana:

"We must develop that idea some fine day, and make a classic feast in my studio, every one wearing antique robes. Will you help me?"

"An admirable idea," said Marciana; "we will have it on Salviati's birthday, and then we will make a *tom-bola* for him."

So it was arranged that they should carry out the plan between them.

In the meantime some of the visitors were taking their departure, and Aisma, preparatory to following their example, went up to pay his respects to Mr. van Walborch, who, however, did not let him off so easily.

"And what do you say now to my glorious, peerless Rome?" he asked.

"Rome is a world in itself—that I feel already; but I have no adequate impression of it as yet; I have still too many separate parts to study."

"If you will accept of an old guide, I shall be happy to act as one; I know my Rome."

"Very gladly; you know the way everywhere, every nook and corner of the galleries."

"Yes, I know Rome. First it strikes as curiously disappointing, does it not?"

"Why—to tell the honest truth, yes. I say nothing of the pictures, but for the rest. . ."

"That is what everybody must say if he speaks as he thinks. For your part you are too well prepared, and too thoroughly at home with the masterpieces of great painters; but most people, even artists, are often disappointed in the great Italians."

"Of course! People are not accustomed to such grand truths. They are used to either a lower kind of truth or to a straining after false effect. And here there is nothing superficial; one must look deeper, and get familiar with the grandeur."

"It is exactly the same with the ruins: how poor and ragged they look to us at first, and smaller too than we expected. The imagination must first clothe these grey and worm-eaten walls with white and colored marble, restore to these mouldered lines their original clearness of outline; yet Rome is a wonderful city, *daimonion ptolietron*. It cannot be said that the art treasures here are fine in every respect: Greek architecture, even in its ruins, is immeasurably superior to

Roman; we saw that at Paestum; and, moreover, a large number of the Roman sculptures are nothing more than copies from the Greek, albeit masterly interpretations; and yet Rome exerts a very peculiar influence, Rome heals and ennobles. Oh, you will be greater when you leave Rome — you will see that."

This which Van Walborch frequently insisted upon here and at other times is of great importance. We must not approach the contemplation of Rome with our heads full of Greek art. Everything is relative. Compared with Greek and Egyptian art, Roman is a falling off. But though we must compare in this way when we want to make a profound study of the subject, yet when we are bent on enjoyment we need not be always comparing, we must take every object by itself. The Roman buildings were not constructed of such precious materials, nor had they, any more than the statues, the sublime simplicity and dignity of the Hellenic. And yet Rome had something peculiar to herself; she had her Corinthian columns and capitals; her baths, aqueducts, basilicas, villas, are all her own invention. There is more of modern luxury and comfort in the Roman world: it is closer to ourselves, more nearly related to our own. Rome does not possess the noblest remains of antiquity; she has no buildings so magnificent as those of Paestum and Girgenti. The finest Renaissance style, a Palazzo Strozzi or Pitti, a dome like that of Florence, is not to be seen here, any more than the glorious triumphs of art that bear the names of Ghiberti, Donatello, Lucca della Robbia, Verrocchio, Cellini, Da

Vinci. Neither do we find the best antique sculptures. The most splendid Greek sculptures are in London ; the elder art works of *Ægenetes* and the most beautiful satyr — the *Barberini* — are at Munich ; the most beautiful *Aphrodite*, that of *Melos*, the best copy of the *Hermaphrodite*, of the *Venus in the bath*, of the *Diana*, are at Paris.

A large number of the Roman buildings would now, if considered in the abstract, find no mercy at the hands of a jury. Only think of their fronts overloaded with attic stories ; the superfluous additions that so often disfigure the pediment, the twisted columns, the ponderous entablatures — all the nonsense of the *Borrominis* and *Berninis* — even the very doubtful value of the interior of *St. Peter's*. And yet, notwithstanding all this, Rome is unique ! That which has become historic possesses deep interest. And here it seems to be the slow birth of time, not the work of individual men or individual will : consequently, the impression made is not of chance or caprice, but of natural necessity. Rome is unique in virtue of all that she unites within herself — her atmosphere and grand landscape, her magnificent historical background, her significance as the birthplace and the battle-field of our entire Western civilization. One could not name a spot that does not possess, over and above its intrinsic interest, countless associations. This it is that makes Rome so full, so living, so mysterious, so powerful over the imagination ; this causes us to bring to Rome all our art reminiscences. It is as if the things of beauty, which are now in other places, have only

taken up their abode there for a time, while their true home is in Rome. We bring everything back to that centre, which has been the heart of the world these eighteen hundred years. When we enter Rome—no matter whence we come—we feel that we are passing from the provinces into *the* city, the Urbs.

## CHAPTER IX.

ONE morning, the model Aisma expected failed to make his appearance. The fellow had probably been summoned to serve some other artist for an Apostle or a Moses; or likely enough he thought the weather too fine, and was spending the morning perched on one of the basins of the fountains in the Piazza Navona, listening to the soft babbling of the falling waters. He was sitting to our painter for King Priam. He had a good head for the purpose, with his smooth cranium thinly sprinkled with silky white locks, and his full grey beard.

Aisma, therefore, resolved to carry out his intention of paying a visit to Askol, the sculptor. He took a carriage to the Piazza delle Terme, and speedily found the number of the house. Askol had hired a couple of spacious vaults in the baths of Diocletian and filled them up as workrooms. Upstairs he had a more elegant studio; downstairs he kept his clay and marble for larger works. The studio was reached by an outer staircase, which he had adorned with climbing plants,

flowers, and fragments of ancient sculpture. Before the door stood a table of antique fashion, and on it a bronze cast of one of his works—a fettered martyr, a vigorous production, where the somewhat forced posture showed the influence of Michael Angelo. Above the door stood the bust of Bacchus, once called Ariadne.

The studio upstairs was a large vaulted apartment, whose tessellated floor was mediæval; the walls were hung here and there with old tapestry. Askol had painted the open spaces with large festoons of boughs and fruits, such as are seen in one of the apartments of the house of Livia on the Palatine, those beautiful festoons with their rich, deep colors, that remind us so strongly of Flemish and Dutch paintings. Against the walls stood carved benches and sofas, with Eastern carpets, while a similar carpet did duty as a table-cover. Scattered around were beautifully-painted studies and sketches presented by friends, casts from the antique, painted Greek vases, and on a couple of moulding-boards sketches in clay by Askol himself. In the centre of the room stood his recently-completed Adorante, a beautiful boy with arms uplifted in prayer. In a corner was a grand piano.

Askol received Aisma with a hearty welcome. "I am glad to see you," he said, jerking out his short sentences in his own rapid, direct way. "Your pictures delight me immensely. *That* is what I call painting the antique. Yes, just look about you at your leisure. There is my Adorante—it is going to America. I had a handsome boy for my model—a rare piece of good

luck. Oh, it is enough to break one's heart, those lean, washed-out models, whom we have so often to put up with here!"

Aisma warmly expressed his admiration, as he walked round and round the statue.

"Yes, it is beautiful, is it not?—that line," said Askol, running his thumb along the turn of the leg as if he were modelling.

Then he whistled, and gave a sign to his attendant, who proceeded to place on the table a large wicker flask and two goblets, which Askol filled with golden Orvieto.

"Sit down now," said Askol, who had an amusing way of commanding. Then he handed Aisma a beaker, and pledged him, exclaiming, "*Favorisca!*"

Close by stood a round relievo, from which Aisma found it difficult to withdraw his eyes. It represented a seated satyr, against whose shoulder a little winged Eros was leaning, hiding his arrow behind his back. There was an idyllic loveliness about this bas-relief which was antique both in conception and execution. Aisma remarked that the classic *naïveté* had been well rendered here.

"Yes, the ancients are unequalled in their own style," said Askol; "but yet we must go a step further—more action, more soul."

"Ah!" answered Aisma, "that's a dangerous point, Mr. Askol. To some little extent, I grant you; yet even then only as regards certain subjects. But it is the broad way, the way that leads to destruction; and, to

“speak frankly, Michael Angelo himself made considerable progress on that road.”

“Oh!” exclaimed Askol, with a vehement gesture; “no, no! Michael Angelo is the man for us moderns. Our blood runs too quickly, our minds are too full, for antique repose.”

“Do you imagine, then, that the Greek mind was a stranger to passion? No, that was not so; but they knew how to restrain their art within certain limits. Michael Angelo is a giant; but yet he is greatest when he puts a restraint upon himself, as in the Santa Croce Madonna, for instance. Some of the effigies on the tombs of the Medici are too forced and constrained, and in his Moses I feel a want of simplicity.”

“Moses has been spoiled in the polishing; it takes away all the repose of the marble.”

“That may be; but for my part, great sculptor as he unquestionably is, in my eyes he is still greater as the painter of the Sistine Chapel.”

“Ancient Rome has mastered you already, I see. Take care. Modern life has its requirements too, and these utter themselves in our modern sculpture.”

“Perhaps you are partly right; but I cannot put it away from me. I admire Michael Angelo as a sculptor, and yet I should admire him more unreservedly if that disgusting Bernini were not always at his heels, parodying and exaggerating him.”

“Just come downstairs a minute; I have a great work in hand.”

They descended a flight of stairs and reached the



space below, in itself a large vaulted hall, but fitted up in all respects as a sculptor's workroom. Here stood huge blocks of Carrara marble, plaster models of finished statues; there lay moulding-sticks and heaps of clay; while everything was powdered with plaster and marble dust. In a corner, busy at work, was Angelo, one of those *praticiens*, skilful in modelling plaster and hewing marble in the rough to prepare it for the finishing touches of the artist. A marble bust of Garibaldi had just been completed.

He was now copying in marble a large group, of which the clay model had just been pointed. It was Eve crouching on the ground in shame, and huddling herself together as if to hide her figure, her one hand seeming to ward off Adonai, who has come to demand an account of her deed. They were bold, Michael Angelo-like contours; the shadows under the lowering brows, and the lips curling in anger, displayed more of the wrath of the Titaness degraded to humanity than the shame of the weak woman.

In the centre stood the work that Askol was engaged on. He flung aside the damp cloths that covered the clay figures. The group was striking; at the first glance it was seen to be no ordinary conception. It was an Amazon, more than life-size. Askol had presented a new view of a subject so often treated by the ancients. The old sculptures almost always represented the Amazon alone and in repose, Askol had represented his type of the man-contemning heroine in the fury of battle.

Drawn up to her full height, in violent action, the flying folds of her chiton reaching scarcely to her knee, the powerful limbs—one thigh visible—poised for a rapid forward stride; she held in her right hand the double battle-axe, while her left held down by the hair a warrior who had sunk to his knees. The bared right breast was wounded, but the victory remained with the stalwart Amazon.

"Well?" said Askol, fixing his sparkling brown eyes with a smile on Aisma.

"It is a triumphant argument for your method, and every method, so long as it continues to reverence beauty, has its rights. The entire conception, the contrasts, the lines, are marvellously fine."

Askol passed his arm through that of the painter, and said:

"That is right; I am glad you understand it. But now tell me frankly all your objections."

"The head is splendid in its pride and triumphant joy, her glance such as one can conceive only in some moment of inspiration. You are on the very verge of exaggeration in the action; but it will pass. But, the one hand crushing down the fallen warrior by the hair—that motive is a little too rough, and even vulgar. Let her open hand rest on his neck, that is nobler; and let the hand be powerful, but not so bony."

Askol looked at him, bethought himself, and said: "It may be that you are right. But there is something else. The feet, hands, and arms are not refined enough; I must express strength, but not the arms and hands of

a charwoman. Oh, that is a trial! where am I to find these? That must be altered."

After they had discussed some other trifling technical questions, Aisma shook the sculptor warmly by the hand.

"You will come to my artists' feast, won't you?" said the latter. "There are some nice maids and matrons coming too. And there is another purpose, a secret among ourselves; we have been making a *tombola* for Salviati. You have surely some drawing you can send us?"

Aisma promised readily, and took his leave. Plunged in thought he now strolled slowly back to the town. Near the Piazza Barberini he observed Salviati, who, having caught sight of him, was approaching. Salviati greeted him cheerfully, and invited him to walk as far as his dwelling.

"This is where I live," said he; "Palazzo Salviati, eh?"

In the spacious old palace, where twenty families at least now peopled the halls and chambers, Salviati occupied an unpretending apartment. Before he entered the portico a flower-girl came up to him with a friendly smile and placed a flower in his button-hole. They do this with great dexterity; but on this occasion it was not to get money. The girl knew Salviati, and did it out of pure kindness.

"*Grazie, grazie*, my good child," said he.

Without the portico two merry children, just about his own size, came up to him and gave him an orange.

"These are the children of the porter of my palace," said Salviati; "I am giving their eldest brother lessons on the violin, and in return his mother looks after my rooms and mends my clothes. All excellent, excellent people. Yes, that's the way people must help each other in this world."

Aisma was touched.

"I sincerely respect and sympathize with you and your fortitude," he exclaimed, warmly shaking Salviati by the hand as he took leave.

"Eh! what shall I reply?" said Salviati, with a comical gesture. "If I had planned my own fate I should be enraged at my bad work; but we can do nothing to mend matters; *è! che volete!*"

Aisma sauntered slowly on. The Triton of the Fontana Barberini tossed up its waters so gaily, there was such an unconstrained natural life in the body and the plump cheeks of the sea-monster, the jet curved downwards with such a sparkling shower of rainbow-colored drops, the drops rattled in the basins with such a sociable clatter and babble, that Aisma thought: "Why does all this make me so happy and contented? O Rome, Rome, wherein lies thy magic spell? Thy Bernini is often a very miscreant as regards art; and yet this little fountain is his, and it is so lovely and so satisfying!"

The clocks struck noon, and he turned into the Via Sistina and sought his lodgings. He took up the Iliad and read once more the masterly passage which portrays with such few strokes the appearance of Helen before the Trojan fathers. Wrapped in the folds of her silver-

bright robe, and followed by two female attendants, she hurried up to the Skaian gate. There around Priam sat the greybeards.

All grave old men : and soldiers they had been, but for age  
Now left the wars ; yet counsellors they were exceeding sage.  
And as in well-grown woods, on trees, cold, spiny grasshoppers  
Sit chirping, and send voices out that scarce can pierce our ears  
For softness, and their weak, faint sounds ; so talking on the  
tower,

Those seniors of the people sate ; who, when they saw the power  
Of beauty, in the queen, ascend, even those cold-spirited peers,  
Those wise and almost withered men, felt this heat in their years ;  
That they were forced (through whispering) to say, What man  
can blame

The Greeks and Trojans to endure, for so admired a dame,  
So many miseries, and so long ? In her sweet countenance shine  
Looks like the goddesses. And yet (though never so divine)  
Before we boast, unjustly still, of her enforced prize,  
And justly suffer for her sake, with all our progenies,  
Labor and ruin, let her go ; the profit of our land  
Must pass the beauty. \*

He looked at his canvas and felt that after all he must eschew everything like commonplace prettiness, and preserve the grand simplicity of the poet.

Then his eye fell on the line from Pompeii which, one day, yielding to a fanciful impulse, he had traced on the wall in red paint : "*Odero se potero, se non. . .*"

He could scarcely be said to think of what connected itself with the words ; they were but half-conscious atoms of thought still hovering about disunited.

He went out again and found himself, without any

\* Chapman.

volition of his own, at the Piazza di Spagna, caught himself on the point of taking the road past Marciana's dwelling, but turned to the left and strayed up the Corso. He thought of Salviati's cheerful fortitude, which had borne him so lightly through his sufferings; of Ada, who suffered herself to be so completely overwhelmed by circumstances; of the power of self-command in Marciana; of the old heart-ache which he sometimes wilfully permitted to shut out the sunbeams that were piercing their way to his soul, till at the end of the Corso he was suddenly roused by Marciana's voice.

"Well, were you determined not to see me?" she said, smiling.

Aisma apologized for his absence of mind, and begged leave to walk home with her. He talked about what he had seen that morning, and allowed some of the thoughts that had occupied him to shimmer through his account. Absorbed in their conversation, they paced up and down the Piazza del Popolo, till Aisma proposed to conduct her home over the Pincio.

The direction his thoughts had been taking induced him to lead the conversation to Ada, and he said:

"I have several times been on the point of asking you about her, but feared I might be taking too great a liberty. I feel interested in her; there is something about her now and then which I—but perhaps I put it too strongly—should be inclined to think might threaten insanity."

They were now walking in one of the less frequented

lanes, so that Marciana felt inclined to gratify Aisma's curiosity.

"I have known Ada long," she began, and paused; as her thoughts reverted to the past, her own past rose before her. "It was a time in which I myself had much to struggle against. I was married; she was a little older than I; we had similar illusions. The steeds of fancy bore us both to some height above the common earth. With a strong effort I succeeded in getting them back to firm ground; *she* was carried away. She had too little iron in her, and her fantasy had no ground of reality to rest upon. Ah! perhaps after all everything depends on the mixture of our blood or our brains. She knew nothing of real life, and she was not suffered to know anything of it, so here again it was the force of circumstances that were too strong for her.

"Until her seventeenth year she had been a blooming, cheerful, but sensitive girl. Her flowers and doves, her music, the sunshine, were the world in which she laughed, romped, and took her pleasure. Gradually her ideals assumed more tangible, though still very vague, forms. Schumann and Mendelssohn, Byron and Schiller, conjured up pictures in her imagination. Sometimes there was among them a dream of a little house of her own, with a sunny patch of garden; but her cat and her doves, rather than a husband, were the principal figures therein. The spirit of criticism awoke too; she read and began to think. She received a strictly orthodox education, but it proved too weak to stem the tide of new ideas. A very little supernaturalism remained

hovering about her like a poetic vapor, but doctrine and worship tottered and crumbled. Their ruins alone remained standing in the light of the moon, overgrown with the ivy of childish recollections. When a mere infant she had lost her parents, and was left alone with four spinster aunts, like a swan amidst barn-door fowls. And it was with fear and horror that the fowls saw the swan take to the water. They were strict believers in the old doctrines, held that the world is wholly given over to evil, that earthly pleasure, of whatever nature, is a temptation of the wicked one. The church was not enough for them; they filled their days with district-visiting, religious meetings, Dorcas Societies, alms collecting, and so forth. Moreover, they took a profound interest in missionaries; and the hereafter of unbaptized negroes lay heavy on their hearts when they thought that these poor creatures in the backwoods of Africa had never heard of the doctrine of Bogerman, and did not even know where Dort was; and without that how could there be any hope for them?"\*

Marciana was interrupted by a burst of laughter from Aisma, but resumed :

" You understand that these ladies were regarded by many as shining examples of piety, and by every one as very excellent people. I, however, took the liberty of remarking that, with all their fury against the vanities of the world, they paid assiduous court to aristocratic pietists and devout ladies of rank. Ah! and they

\* Bogerman was an orthodox clergyman of the seventeenth century; Dort is the principal centre of the orthodox doctrine in Holland.



prowled about the back streets to preach at the children, and they crept into prisons to give lectures to sisters in the Lord; but the lot of their own sister's child gave them very little concern; and the child had no father to teach her, no mother to form her. Wider and wider grew the gulf between the pious aunts and the young girl, with her craving for natural pleasure and mental food. That innocent delight in life, that mental sustenance, that music in which she delighted — all these were made a daily reproach to her as sin and vanity, as a disgrace she was bringing down upon a pious household. The girl began to pine, and her fresh cheeks faded. A council was called in the conclave. She was sent to relations residing in a lonely country house, chill and damp under the shade of gloomy oaks, with a great iron gate over which sat two stone lions grinning at the crumbling escutcheon they held between their claws. Gaiety, sinful gaiety, was what the poor yearning soul was in no danger of finding here; yet she found some respite from religious persecution. The first letters of hers that I possess date from this period, letters — I wish you could read them — full of poetry, humorous with their contrasts and reflections, the style so good that they might be printed as they stand. Especially the later ones — full of bitterness, despair, delicate poetry, and powers of observation — displayed real talent. Oh, when I see what a rich heart, what great gifts have been destroyed by these spiteful creatures with their pretensions to the aureole of sanctity!"

Marciana was growing warm over her theme, and

Aisma, glancing askance at her now and then, was charmed by the rich mind uttering itself through lips so beautiful. At intervals they continued their walk.

"And then?" asked he, in order to set her talking again.

"Then suddenly a man's name came into play. Although the girl was said to be so worldly, she still shrank from the thought of a husband. At home there had been no male visitors except closely-buttoned English divines, or a virtuously formal ancient clergyman, who came, when some missionary question had to be settled, or the church was in danger and money was wanted to buttress her. Ada had to wear a cotton frock, and the missionaries swallowed up the rest, which might well have bought silk — nay, brocade! Well, the man I was speaking of meant well enough, but he went awkwardly to work, as most men do."

Aisma laughed, and looked at the speaker.

"Why, yes," she said; "most men want to master a girl — to subject her; they will have her renounce her substantive existence. They demand that we shall let ourselves be absorbed into their being; and they forget we too have a being of our own."

"Pardon me, I too am of the opinion that in the union of man and woman there must be an amalgamation. Two autocratic powers side by side could not possibly exist."

"And so we must be swallowed up in your autocracy?"

He did not like to acknowledge that in point of fact; this was just what is generally demanded or desired, and he sought to give his reply another turn.

"You cannot but admit that, as a rule, the man is the stronger and better developed: at least, he has the most experience. Two colors in immediate contact must not be equally predominant—that is a law of harmony."

"Well, then, let the woman's color be the prevailing one," said Marciana, laughing.

"Would you, then, marry, or could you respect, a man who was your most obedient servant?"

They had seated themselves on a bench, and Marciana was describing circles in the sand with her parasol. She felt that they had got into a circle from which it was impossible to escape.

"Well," she said, "the inexperienced girl shyly rejected that proposal. The aunts were enraged at having missed the chance of getting rid of her in that way. There followed an explosion of wrath from the Christian Furies, and a second banishment. What Ada suffered under that excommunication! Some of her letters would make you shudder.

"She had to go abroad for her health, and her aunts seized the opportunity. Thanks to their machinations, they have made it impossible for her to return to the town where they live. They kept her at a distance that she might be no thorn in the side of the pietists. For about four years she has been wandering about in foreign lands, because she lacks strength to shake off the old

trammels. Homeless, she wanders from one *pension* to the other — if it is cold, in Italy; if it is hot, in Switzerland — without a stay, without sufficient sound learning to sustain free thought, and she is ever wavering between her own inclinations, that are so pure, and the fear that she may be actually such a monster as her aunts from time to time impress upon her that she is. Self-reproach has gained ground in her soul, and tortures her without cause. A deep melancholy, a loathing of the world, has taken the brightness out of everything; to her all things are colorless and purposeless. Her memories are all that is still living, and in these she beholds in redoubled splendor the delusive visions of a youth full of promise — visions that faded fast in the chill atmosphere that surrounded her; which, like her poetry, suffered shipwreck. That dream of her youth has become a mania, and the present has no longer any real existence for her.

“Oh! if I could only get her to work! for there are rich treasures of mind slumbering in her yet. Work is the restorer of all things, the true panacea — we all experience that ourselves, do we not?”

The tone and manner in which this was said conveyed more than was expressed in words. Was it a gentle invitation to draw out his thoughts on the subject? Aisma dared not yield to it, though he would fain have done so. All he therefore said was:

“Yes, indeed, we have all experienced that.”

They now got up from the bench where they had, unconsciously, been sitting closer to each other than

the space at their disposal rendered necessary. When they rose they observed that behind the bench, on a pedestal shaded by a flowering shrub, had been standing a listener. Both looked at him, and then involuntarily at each other, till Aisma could not repress a smile, and Marciana turned aside with a heightened color. There stood a little Eros, with outstretched arms and bent bow.

"We have been sitting in dangerous company," Aisma ventured to remark, jestingly, while he looked straight into her eyes.

Marciana had quite recovered from her confusion, and laughed.

"Of his?" she said. "Bah! his shots fly over our heads."

Then, with insignificant small-talk on their lips, though their minds were full of thought, they descended the hill. Aisma escorted her to her own door, where she parted from him with a friendly good-bye.

## CHAPTER X.

MR. VAN WALBORCH had conceived a warm regard for Aisma. The painter's frank, manly character, prepossessing exterior, and refined manners, had attracted him, while his extraordinary talent filled him with admiration. He beheld in the painter youthful fervor and splendid gifts on the point of ripening into man-

hood, combined with perfect mastery of art. He saw the traces of struggle in the heart and in artistic aspiration, which needed only the final clarifying to enable him to attain fulness of strength and self-knowledge, and he felt impelled to bring his own experience to aid in the process. Himself elevated above the strife and in the enjoyment of quiet self-possession, he took a delight in enabling his new-found friend to benefit by what he had won for himself, in the same manner as he had ever striven to strengthen, guide, and secure the happiness of Marciana, whom he loved as a daughter.

He was the scion of an old historic race; his father had been a supporter of the old system of government. But when he was old enough to think and act for himself, this system was on the point of dissolution; new ideas demanded their realization.

Like all new ideas, these were generated among the democracy, not the aristocracy. They put forward claims for which the masses were not yet ripe; but Van Walborch understood that the masses who already felt such wants must be educated up to them. He did not insist on clinging to everything old; whatever was of value he desired to preserve, but he saw that new forms were indispensable, and that those who by right of birth possessed the aristocracy of form ought also to support and represent in the new ideas the aristocracy of mind. If the democracy were left altogether to their own leaders, poetry and idealism would be in peril; for poetry and idealism are aristocratic by nature.

For this reason he ranged himself with the leaders

of progress, of the movement for liberty. During the prime of his manhood he gave his best powers to practical life. But there came a time when politics began to be disagreeable to him. Wherever a state exists there must unquestionably be statesmanship, and it is not well that the most finely organized spirits should hold themselves aloof from its practice. Nevertheless, there is a fatality attending politics, which from time to time causes them to degenerate into petty intrigues: vital principles become personal questions, and it is difficult, nay, almost impossible, for a man to pass his whole life amidst these intrigues and yet preserve his purity intact. Sooner or later even the best of men are gradually infected and profaned. Van Walborch had done his duty, contributed his due share of vital energy to the common weal, but he did not consider himself called upon to consume his whole life in such an atmosphere. From the arena of the practical and the commonplace, he had borne off his idealism intact; he had not, as so many do, contracted a tinge of cynicism or misanthropy. The æsthetic sense blossomed afresh in his mind. He was not only Doctor of Laws but of Letters, as most eminent men used to be, even down to some fifty years ago. Since that time the two have been separated. The men of legal and political knowledge remain strangers to literary and æsthetic culture, while the men of literary tastes limit their humanities, neglecting art and beauty, and composing a caste of mere specialists. Those who seek to ennoble and exalt literature by means of art, to make learning

conducive to æsthetic productivity — they are wont to stigmatize as *dilettanti*. Absorbed in the anatomy of language, they do not help to form minds attuned to the love of nature and of poetry. There is, of course, no objection to their treating language and literature as science — such laborers render most important services; but the disadvantage is this—that the fusion of æsthetics and science in other minds is frequently retarded, art and letters deprived of the classic basis so indispensable to them; for the cultivators of *belles lettres* mostly form themselves without this, and thus science and art are in great danger of being alienated from each other.

Van Walborch was one of the disciples of the school of Bake, Geel, and Van Limburg-Brouwer, in which the strong classic basis gave severe simplicity to the mind and Attic salt to the taste; the school which has now again become so necessary, since, with the majority, the classics no longer form a regular branch of education.

He was still a good old humanist, who sought harmony in the mind, to whom poetry was no mere fantasy, but higher knowledge, true alike to the ideal and the real.

Even when at college, while studying the laws of the Romans, he used to note the many passages which threw light on art and antiquity. In his study of Demosthenes the literary aspect was kept as prominently in view as the legal one.

When a crisis arose in the political world he began to loathe the mean-spiritedness, the triumph of falsehood and injustice, the sins against the noblest principles of



freedom, which he had to witness. The fourth estate pressed stormily to the front, trumpeting their crude and premature demands. If he did not support the proletariat, he was twitted with being a disguised aristocrat, an obsolete liberal. He found it to be anything but a desirable consequence of freedom when the first agitator that could wield a pen was ready to lay down the law on the most abstruse questions of politics, art, and philosophy; when every street urchin was ready to say to his superior: "Go to the devil." A humanist by culture, he was *humane* in the highest sense, with a heart to feel for all the distresses of his fellow-men, ever comprehending and excusing, seeing nothing but good in all; and, even when the evil was clearly proved, gentle in his judgments. He knew that man is liable to err, aye, even to the last hour of his life; that all things are relative, the good as well as the evil; that stumbling is a necessary condition of reaching a higher level. "All men equal—hu'm," said he, with the shrewd smile habitual to him; "equal from a zoological point of view, equal as to possibilities; but all possibilities are not realized in individual cases. Parentage, blood, social sphere, incidental circumstances, determine those possibilities. Equal rights for all—civil rights, certainly, but, philosophically speaking? Do not profound study, high and refined culture, confer on their possessor other rights than pertain to him who is chained down to matter—the slave of daily drudgery for daily bread? All men are *not* equal; there are inferiors and superiors. We do not despise the inferior class on that account. In all

ranks and conditions are noble hearts; honor them because they *are* noble, not because of a theory of aristocrats and democrats."

When he had passed his fiftieth year he abandoned law for letters. "I have hung up my gown in the temple of Themis," he said, "as Horace's sailor hung up his wet clothes in the temple of Neptune:

' Me tabula sacer  
Votiva paries indicat uvida  
Suspendisse potenti  
Vestimenta maris deo.' "

For some years he had been living for his ancient authors and ancient art—*beatus procul negotiis*—happy, without official cares. Of late he had been wont to spend some months of every year in Italy, and Rome had grown to be his favorite spot—the central spot of the world, he said, in which the motherland, Hellas, has become practical and modern for all the world.

He was a passionate lover of Horace, and knew the works of this master of elegant form and shrewd philosophy by heart. He called Horace his private physician, and he was never without a recipe concerning art and real life drawn from his doctrines.

All these principles had been inculcated in Marciana since she had come to reside with him, after death had dissolved her unhappy marriage. As he was a bachelor, the arrangement which enabled them to dwell and travel together was very comfortable for both. He had preached to her Horatian equanimity under every difficulty and every trouble, the *aqua mens rebus in arduis*,

and the cheerfulness that springs from it. He was no Stoic, and he remonstrated against the would-be Spartanism or Stoicism with which Marciana strove to still her mental conflict, to tame her unattained ideals. It is to be supposed, however, that the tenderness of his friendship did more to bind them together than his Horatian precepts. It had formerly been deemed not impossible that a closer tie might be formed between them. But Van Walborch's refined and delicate mind would have considered it egotism to bind this younger life indissolubly to his own. He judged Marciana capable of far keener happiness; and such an idea never suggested itself to his fatherly affection. To her, on the other hand, the existing relations were very welcome. She had made an iron resolve never more to be the victim of any illusions in regard to marriage. So it came about that on a former visit to Rome, when she had been admiring the wounded Amazon in the Capitol, he had likened her to it, and she had laughingly acquiesced. "The wound is closed now," she had said, "but an Amazon I am and will remain."

And so they lived in the happiest friendship, she perfectly free in her movements and way of life, mistress of her mind and actions.

## CHAPTER XI.

MARCIANA was no young unsteady girl. But though not far short of thirty, she was still in the full glow of

a mature beauty, whose fascination consisted chiefly in the freshness of its bloom and the style which seemed a part of her very being. There was about her a peculiar and mysterious charm. Her character was strong, at times almost masculine ; yet she was woman to the core, and there was nothing more displeasing to her or more foreign to her nature than the rude and actually masculine manners in which the freedom and independence of some women find expression. She deviated, however, from the ordinary type of womanhood in so far that the softness and tenderness of gentle feminine natures were present in hers in less ample measure, at least it was much less conspicuous. Yet she was not ungentle ; her feelings were warm and fine, but they did not lie on the surface, and they were kept in equipoise by a highly cultivated intellect. Circumstances had undoubtedly contributed to throw the tenderness of her nature into the background, and to bring its strength into prominence. Hence it came that her brilliancy appeared to some observers to resemble less the warmth of genial sunshine than the glitter of hard metal. Her mind had been nurtured on all that is great. To current literature she gave just the attention necessary to prevent her from being quite ignorant, but her serious consideration was given to the very best alone, that which might claim to be of permanent value. The great masters of former times had furnished her with a law which served as a bulwark against all coarseness, insipidity, and meanness. She who was familiar with Goethe and Heine, Shakespeare and Dante, the great Greeks, and the chiselled deli-

cacy of Horatian speech, had naturally but small liking for that modernism which owes its success to the craving for excitement, to the painting of coarse reality, to affectation, or the romanticist contempt of form. The feeling for classic dignity and moderation had been developed in her by Van Walborch, and to this was added her own susceptibility to the beauties of nature and popular poetry. Nature and *naïveté* go hand in hand with the high art which is grounded in sincerity and simplicity. As form and dignity imparted a certain consecrated charm to her whole being, so in all works of art she loved the higher form which we call style. Although no stranger in Rome—for this was her third visit extending over several months—it was by Aisma that her eyes had first been opened to the beauties of the great Italian masters, and at the same time to the noblest expressions of the modern school of painting. This gradually established a certain bond between them.

Aisma had soon become anything but indifferent to her, and she too saw that he was something different from common men. Moreover, the soberness of his attitude towards her had first excited her curiosity and then attracted her. Without any distinct wish to make a conquest, she was not pleased to be altogether unobserved by him; her woman's nature, not to be confounded with coquetry or vanity, could not bear this neglect. Remarkable individualities cannot fail to exercise some power of attraction on each other, let them dissemble it or no. Unconsciously, and in spite of herself, there was thus engendered a certain — let me

call it an absence of indifference. Yet, with the inherent fickleness of womankind, or, if they prefer it, of some women, no sooner did she perceive that Aisma was not quite insensible to her power, than she again entrenched herself in increased reserve. Thus she had not suffered his personality to work any change in her or to dominate her too strongly. She had tasted much heart-bitterness; the young widow was not unadvised or unguarded. She entertained a full conviction that a certain period in her emotional life belonged irrevocably to the past. She had wept, jested, fought it down, and by this means alone learned to reconcile herself to things as they were. On no account would she suffer her hard-won self-possession to be disturbed. She sought strength in something like Stoicism. If it were not given her to find gratification for all the cravings of human nature, she had taught herself to crush them. Yes, she was, and she was resolved to remain, an Amazon; the jest had become serious earnest to her. No longer wounded, but still an Amazon; her own master in her woman's rights, rejecting the love of man, who seeks in return a love which means self-renunciation. She had, as the Amazon legend relates, removed from her bosom, in a spiritual sense, that portion which prevents the woman from being strong enough to stand alone.

When she touched this subject, Van Walborch would look at her with a smile or shake his head.

"That is not the way," he said; "there is nothing in man that he can do without, that he can extirpate without its somehow avenging itself. The Amazons

mutilated themselves, and an un mutilated human being stands higher. If you fear over-sensibility — which you call weakness — if you shut your heart against it, then you will become dry, hard, unsympathetic. If we let the organs of feeling get dull we grow unlovable, and our humanity is in peril. We must train our inclinations, not eradicate them; nothing is a fault in a normal human being; all things may become so; everything is necessary, but all must be ruled and toned down to the higher harmony of all our gifts. Not a brass instrument or bass or flute must let itself be heard above the orchestra to the disturbance of harmony, but each in its degree be subordinate to the harmonious instrumentation. So does man become a symphony."

He saw that Marciana did not agree with these views, and he had repeatedly warned her that both she and Ada were on a wrong track. Ada did nothing whatever, and surrendered herself wholly to the listlessness and discouragement born of unfulfilled wishes; her feelings were deadened into total indifference. Marciana strangled what she deemed weakness, but along with it she destroyed something of her gentleness. She was strong, but, on the other hand, she was wilful, in her pride.

Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines  
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.

"There is measure in all things; there are limits beyond which the right and fitting has no existence; people are always in extremes, *nil medium est*. Oh,

Horace knew that full well. This bent, this ambition to maintain one's self single-handed against all opposition, is it not a sort of egotism?"

So lectured Van Walborch, and Marciana would toss her head and answer proudly :

"Passion is a wild beast; if you do not slay it, it will slay you."

"Unless you tame and subdue it. There have been wild beasts before now subjected to the will of man."

"Bah!" rejoined Marciana; "make of the tiger a domestic cat, of the wolf a lapdog—no thank you! That were the most prosaic utilitarianism. Better far a royal tiger in his ferocity, than a cat that purrs and scratches!"

Van Walborch could but sigh: "*Nil medium!* No middle course—and yet to obtain repose you must guard your heart against both extremes."

Such was the occasional echo of former thunderstorms, which, however, were heard but seldom.

Now she had grown strong, and with a bright light on her countenance she went her way.

## CHAPTER XII.

ITALY and Rome were already beginning to make their influence felt on Aisma. Half-consciously, half-unconsciously, he became aware that his nature was growing mellow and sunnier, that his mind was gain-



ing in clearness and vigor. All souls that have to undergo the cleansing fires of purgatory are embarked there where Tiber flows to the sea,

" Alla marina  
Dove l'acqua di Tevere s'insala,"

as Dante says with picturesque expressiveness, where the waters of Tiber grow salt. In Dante's eyes this place of embarkation was the church; in ours it is Italy, and in Rome we feel ourselves already in the outer courts of Paradise.

For several years Aisma had been living exclusively in and for his art, keeping apart from the world and bending all his energies towards mastering the difficulties of varying methods, the technical difficulties, the rich treasures of knowledge required for the subjects he had selected. Art was his only mistress, now that the hope of woman's love had been cruelly wrenched away from him. This Muse remained true to him; in her he had not been mistaken; she had not smiled on him with a semblance of sentiments she did not entertain, and hopes she could not or would not realize.

When one human being lets his heart go forth in full surrender to another, and discovers afterwards that he has been deluded, he is wont to lay the blame upon that other. Blame there may be, but very often it is a mere fatality and no evil intent; the man has seen amiss, has erred in his choice. On closer acquaintance the two beings proved unsuited to each other. But, right or wrong, Aisma believed that his heart had been trifled

with, then flung aside. Perhaps it was so ; but be that as it may, the result was identical, namely, grief and bitterness of soul. It is true that man must be perfected by suffering, and the soul remains shallow unless it be deeply dug and trenched, yet he does not submit willingly to this process, but rather with a cry of pain and an effort at resistance. Happy is he who has energy and judgment enough to perceive in course of time that suffering is natural and local, and that on account of his personal woes he need not fancy that the world is given over to evil, that all men are desperately wicked, that the fair face of nature is robbed of its beauty. Only when he has apprehended this can he regain a sounder content. Of infinitely higher value is this finely-cut diamond of the soul, than the rough stone that has never groaned under the hands of the diamond-cutter.

Then the bronze has been heated, smelted, hammered, filed ; but then, also, it has become a work of art, of far higher value than the unrefined ore and the unmanipulated lump of metal.

Aisma had been wounded, embittered, his illusions had faded, his wrath had turned him against the world and his fellow-men, and his sensibility had turned to melancholy. To him, as to Anselm of Canterbury, woman had become a torch of Satan — *fax Satanae*. Gradually the chord grew somewhat less tense, and he was forced to admit that she — still in accordance with the ideas of this woman-experienced theologian — was a sweet evil, a *dulce malum*, but yet that she most

decidedly was an evil ; so that he was firmly and virtuously determined not to let himself be again deluded by the *dulce*. " Besides, an artist," said he, " ought never to marry ; one mistress — Art — is enough, and she is a right jealous mistress too."

It was therefore that he had betaken himself to Italy, with a seething brain and a heart whose wound was closed, indeed, but still liable to smart on slight occasions. He hoped to find himself diversion and enlightenment ; while for his art he sought a higher consecration.

Gradually some of the angles had worn out of his nature. The sunny delight in life, which beams from all things Italian, disarmed his austerity ; the mild air relaxed the tension of soul and nerves ; the breadth and grandeur of the world-history around him raised him above petty individual cares, mortifications, and mischances ; the broadly human, little by little, regained its predominance. He felt himself rejuvenated and renewed ; grief was dispelled softly like the dispersing thunder-clouds on the horizon, and above the disappearing masses laughingly rose the sun.

Sometimes, indeed, another thought crept in — sometimes a new female figure flitted between eye and work ; but he let her pass without seeking to detain her, and remained contented with his work alone. Nay, even the restful strength of this figure became to him an image of repose, which stilled and exalted his troubled spirit. And the grandeur of Italian nature, history, and art, while it enlarged his soul, and accustomed him to

broad, grander proportions, elevated his art as well. Antique repose and lucidity concentrated his Germanic diffuseness; the misty clouds of northern and western speculation were compacted into more definite forms. The magic of Raphael's nobility, of Michael Angelo's Titanic world, of Leonardo's irresistible sweetness, nurtured, formed, and vitalized his ideals.

The ancient world here unfolded her most intimate secrets. She retained her greatness, but showed also those traits that enable us to feel at home with her. At first, in the distance, she seems to us an unattainable ideal—something quite outside our life—which we admire, but cannot fully comprehend. Nevertheless, when we become better acquainted, when we see her entire life, even in its common and every-day aspects, her household furniture, her very walls, and the floors which the ancients trod, the fragments of their viands, of the paints they used, of the clothes and weapons they wore, what a street-boy has scratched on the wall,—all the secrets of their daily life—then we are familiarized with the little particulars of their existence, we live in it and with them; they become to us palpable human beings like ourselves, and the whole grows comprehensible and clear.

All that Aisma knew and had observed by means of his astonishing gift of intuition was here imbued with life. From his youth upwards he had devoted himself to the study of literature and antiquarian research. But now the daily contact with those monuments, in the very same land, by the very same sea and fields and

forests, the very same villas, breathing the very same air and floral fragrance as the men of antiquity—all this imparted to his already sharpened eye that certainty, that power of making the ancient world live again in his art-work, which raised him to a height of achievement no previous painter of the antique had ever attained. In his own and other western countries his work, while it excited the admiration of many, had, owing to the intensity of its novelty, provoked the opposition of many more. People had been too much accustomed to the naturalism of commonplace reality on the one hand, and to a conventional ideal on the other. He, having arrived at a full conviction as to what was his true path, had, with the persistent force of his character, perhaps also with that of his Frisian blood, laughed, and quietly pursued his own course. As the child of the nineteenth century inherits a very complex civilization, so Aisma combined widely different qualities and materials. Antique in taste and in feeling for form, he was modern in spirit and depth of meaning. A descendant of the Flemish and Dutch school, he was far from disdaining its mastery of tone and color; but it was to distinct representation, beauty of form, searching and noble draughtsmanship, that he adjudged the highest rank. While guarding himself carefully against becoming a mere stylist, he yet held in honor refinement in tone and color.

Here, in Rome, he was fully confirmed in his aspirations; here he was ripened into full maturity. He had exhibited a couple of pictures and a couple of wonder-

fully delicate water colors, elaborate in finish, and yet broad in treatment, which attracted much attention, and secured his rank at once. The one was Pericles and Aspasia, free from the former romantic tone, and Greek to a degree possible only to one thoroughly at home in every detail of the life and art of Athens in the fifth century; the other was an Egyptian funeral ceremony. Both preceded by a few years the works of Ebers and Hamerling, who had brought scenes like these within the sphere of modern art. One of his water-color paintings was literary—taken from the opening of Theocritus' vivacious poem, the Syracusan Women, whom he represents so spiritedly in the midst of their gossip, while Praxinoa is dressing to go with Gorgo to the celebration of the feast of Adonis; the other was a minutely elaborate little scene in the time of the Roman Empire. The household goods, the way in which every article of dress was cut and worn, the familiarity with the rarest reliefs, bronzes, vase-paintings, were amazing; and the spectators asked themselves how it was possible that a painter could be such an archæologist, or how an archæologist could be such a painter. For every detail was elaborately worked out, yet with a broad, mellow, confident touch, fresh, yet, even in its greatest vigor, transparent and harmonious. The draughtsmanship was noble and yet natural and full of life; his taste was in the highest degree graceful and refined, his invention was inexhaustible, and invariably striking by reason of its originality.

Mr. van Walborch and Marciana, who knew his

views and aims, visited him repeatedly in his studies, and shared his triumph with gladness.

It was about this time that Aisma, though in the full assurance of possessing his soul in quiet, became aware that, for a man who fancied he had no danger to fear, he was thinking somewhat frequently of Marciana. It is true that he met the suggestion with a negative. Oh, no! not at all! But yet he was ever thinking of her; and at length he was forced to admit to himself that it was her praise that was dearest to him—dearer by far than that of the most competent judges—and that it was quite possible he might not be so safe as he had fancied. On the other hand, he flattered himself with the thought that he who is forewarned is forearmed, and he doubted not that he should be able to restrain his feelings within due bounds.

Moreover, he had often observed that the sculptor, who was a frequent visitor at the house, and with whom she used to go to see the antiques in the villas and galleries, showed a great admiration for Marciana. He fancied that Askol often offered her not only courteous, but tender attentions, and that she did not reject his homage. He saw the frankness of her intercourse with Askol, and deemed that she was not indifferent to him. At times, indeed, he reflected that this might be only a consequence of her position as a married woman, which allowed her a tone of greater familiarity than is permitted to a young girl. Besides, he felt that it was in her nature to be straightforward and open, with a high degree of familiarity and freedom. Thus she saw no objection to

wandering alone with Askol through the Vatican or the Capitol, and she feared no gossip regarding it. Aisma would now and then ask himself: "Would she do that with me, too?"

Whimsical human heart! why such a question if you have nothing to hope or to fear from the influence of that woman?

### CHAPTER XIII.

ONE morning Ada had received a letter from her pious aunts which distressed and perplexed her cruelly. Enclosed was another letter from a friend, and there arose in her mind the painful suspicion that those ladies—so scrupulous where church matters were concerned—had not thought it beneath them to open that epistle. At least, some involuntary allusions to the contents, as well as the way in which it had been re-sealed, was enough to justify a suspicion, which, with any one else, would almost have amounted to certainty. But some lingering remains of the submissiveness in which she had been brought up made her shrink from fully adopting the suspicion and expressing her indignation. As usual, they exhorted her to amend her vain and sinful life, seasoning their reproaches with an admixture of evil speaking regarding her intimacy with a woman so deeply depraved as Marciana. Nay, sinful and vain Ada was not; and as for Marciana, there were many respects in



which they might rather have taken her for an example.

Marciana's mind had been braced by high and noble literature, her character strengthened by her firm will. A poetess by the grace of the Muses, she found in the exercise of her gift a vent for her feelings as well as occupation for her mind ; not those shifting, vague, embryonic sensations by which poetry and fiction often seduce weak natures into empty speculation and fanciful do-nothingness, giving them hazy aspirations without either the power or the energy to put them into shape. This was the case with Ada. Even in early youth she had doted on Schiller and Byron, while from music also she had imbibed only the visionariness inherent in this art, unless it be counterbalanced by sterner stuff. She had never had any guidance ; she had always lived in her illusions, which no one had endeavored to reduce to any distinct form or substance, but which she was taught to regard as suggestions of the Evil One. Thus, ever possessed by the indwelling spirit of poetry, yet ever doubting whether this were not sinfulness and vanity ; then, again, seeing in others how poetry can be united to earnestness and virtue, she, the delicate flower for whom sympathy was a vital necessity, while she experienced nothing but coldness and repulse, was hampered and stunted in her growth. In her gloomy atmosphere she became like a plant which, for want of sunshine, has shot up thin and weak, with pale-green foliage and half-developed flowers. We cannot draw all we need from our own resources ; the educational

force of society is indispensable to us, and this is exactly what had been denied to Ada. She had no other surroundings than the blighting influences of a false piety, and these had made her what she was. Woe and shame to those ~~that~~ had marred this beautiful character! for she had a glorious nature, full of talent, thirsting for knowledge of all kinds. She was once healthy and blooming; she could walk, run, play, sing, laugh, with fresh young lungs; she could skate in the bitterest cold. She was once an impulsive, sensitive being, her head full of poems and melodies: she dreamed that something very poetical was sure to happen to her. But all this had been blunted and stultified instead of being trained to noble issues. Vain, wicked, and shameful, were the epithets applied to her. Ah! and all she yearned for was to be freed from the trammels of a Pharisaic formalism and to breathe a freer spiritual air.

Now, sick 'in soul and body, she wandered from place to place, and strayed through this Rome to which she was a stranger. In truth, she hardly knew why she stayed, unless for Marciana. This friend was her sheet anchor. Though differing so much from her, she twined round this strong column like a climbing plant, which must be supported, else it will drop helplessly to the ground. If Marciana did not invite her, she wandered aimlessly about the city; she went to churches and saw nothing but puppet shows or cold, empty halls; she strayed about in one or other of the squares, and watched the children sailing their boats in the basins of the fountain. If she looked too long she thought she

perceived that the little ones were afraid of that melancholy figure, and then she went away. She would sit for days within the bare and silent walls of her apartment in the *pension*, or gaze in the reading-room at the highly-colored prints of a large hotel in Switzerland, and an Atlantic steamer. Would it be possible to find *there* what she wanted?

In the forenoon on which she had received that torturing letter she went out and walked till she found herself at St. Onofrio, where Tasso lies buried. She observed his monument. "There is his likeness," she mused, "in the dress he wore at the court of Ferrara, leaning against his book-case. Tasso, the handsomest man of his time, and he went mad! And there is the oak under which he composed his 'Jerusalem Delivered.'"

From this point her thoughts took flight. The past! She wept with home-sickness; she thought of her youth, of her garden, where she heard the birds singing as of old. "If I were gay they called me coquettish; poor me! If I showed a liking for books, they called me pedantic. Then already the clock in our neighborhood boomed in my ears: 'Past, past; your life is past already!' Now I see the home of my youth deserted; in a corner stands the desk with the Bible; in another corner my aunt's harp with rusted strings, the leaves of the music-book nibbled by mice. They called them dust-catchers. My little ornaments—everything had to be cleared out of the way, and at last I was cleared away too. In my garden the doves are lying dead in

their dove-cot; I am driven to a foreign land. There I sit alone in Pompeian-painted halls; the sea-wind howls in the chimneys; the fierce sunbeams glare on the treacherous waves of Nice, and dazzle my eyes weak with weeping. My cat has grown wild from long confinement, and scratches me. The servants and attendants smile, sometimes compassionately, at the half-distraught lady. I read Hyperion to console myself. Now again Rome lies at my feet; I count the seven hills. What is that large building? A lunatic asylum. Poor mad people, how they must suffer in this cruel heat! The sun glares on the white walls; there stand a couple of palm-trees; how the grass in the yard is scorched! Happy are those who die young in their fatherland."

She clasped her throbbing forehead with her wasted hands, then descended the hill with trembling steps. "Whither? Why should I go to my lodgings? Why should I not? Around me is nought but ruins; the babbling fountain has no voice for me. The clear voice of that young mother who is washing her linen in the basins sounds shrill and strange to me. A mendicant monk in his russet gown saunters along in the shelter of a high blind wall."

"Carità! Signora mia!"

"*Carità!* Who has *carità* for me? There, poor wretch, are some bajocchi for you; it is no fault of yours, after all."

Into St. Peter's. Here is a morning walk for strangers. Young couples meet each other behind a

pillar under pretence of listening to the singing in the dome, or to that resounding in a side chapel. By turns the bass, tenor, and soprano sing a solo; they find their tune without the key having been given. How long they sustain the prolonged wailing note! One feels disposed to draw a long breath for sympathy. They pass from major to minor without the help of instruments. The mournful sounds transport us to the Mount of Golgotha. Suddenly there is a crash and a shriek. An English lady has fallen on the ground from her camp-stool; two facchini raise her to her feet.

Yonder from a confessional projects what appears a long fishing-rod, and descends on the head of a kneeling boy. So every passer-by may receive a benediction. Edification, like happiness, lies wherever we can find it. "Oh, sad day — sad hour, which first led my weary feet to wander in this place! I am goaded onwards, and pant for rest; and nowhere, even in a church, is rest to be found."

She returned home ill and feverish, went to bed without having tasted food, and wept long and bitterly. "Oh, upon my wasted life!"

If the Galilean sage, with His great love and holy anger, were to return to the earth, He would take up in His arms the poor sheep cast out as infected from the flock. He would command the evil spirits that tortured her to enter into the swine, and run down the steep rock into the sea.

## CHAPTER XIV.

It did not strike Marciana as anything unusual that Ada preferred to be alone sometimes, but now that it was three days since she had seen or heard anything of her, she began to think there must be something wrong. So she went to her friend's lodgings. She found her sitting-room empty. The heavy furniture, in the style of the Empire, was arranged stiffly round the room; not a book or a flower or an article of clothing testified to human occupancy. Anxiously Marciana then sought the bedroom, where she found Ada in bed.

"Child, what is the matter? I have not heard a word from you; why did you not send for me?"

Ada held out to her a cold and clammy hand. The gentle face was very pale, the eyes alone were glowing. Marciana saw that she was feverish, and, hastily removing her hat and gloves, she seated herself by the bedside.

By slow degrees Ada told her what she had done, thought, and suffered during that last walk. Marciana went out of the room for a moment, and then returned bearing some oranges and ice, with which she proceeded to make a cooling draught. She bathed the temples and wrists of the sufferer, put fresh linen on her pillows, kissed her, and sat for hours by her side, diffusing by her presence love, thoughtfulness, repose, and thus tranquillizing the troubled spirit.

"What has brought this about?"

"A letter from——."

"Well?"

"Now they all at once demand that I shall return to them, bid adieu to my disgraceful way of life, and——."

"And avoid my company——?"

"How do you know that?"

"It is not difficult to guess. And what are you going to do?"

"Oh, that is what perplexes me so sadly; I am dependent on them."

"That is to say, you suffer yourself to be kept dependent; Jesuit-like, they have killed your will in your youth."

"Well, but after all they are my nearest blood relations. I have been too weak, perhaps, but I cannot help it. Deny *you* though—that I will not do."

"So," said Marciana, with anger darkening her brow and curling her lips, "that is how matters stand. But now no more of it; we will discuss it when you are better."

She chatted on about indifferent matters, not saying much, but just sufficient to start a different track of thought. Then she kissed her patient and said:

"Poor dear, lie down quietly now; I shall soon come back again."

Marciana went home and acquainted Mr. van Walborch with the state in which she had found Ada. His kind heart had often been deeply concerned about Ada's

fate, ever since she had been so much with them in Rome, and they had taken her about with them everywhere to try to draw her out of her liking for solitude.

"We always come back to the old starting-point," he said. "Marciana, what can we do for her? You must take her seriously in hand when she is better."

"With all my heart, if there is any possibility, and if I have any power over her. I am younger than she, but," she added, not without a touch of sadness, "older in experience."

"And in strength of mind, my child; could I only impart to her some of the Horatian equanimity!"

"Ah!" said Marciana, laughing; "your private physician will be powerless to cure her!"

"Why so? has he not helped to form me?"

"Yes, but strength must always come out of ourselves; it is strange, but other people's experience never helps any one. If it did, how different everybody would be!"

"Do not say that; it is true that there must always be something within ourselves that co-operates, but yet people form each other, though they don't like to admit it."

"Oh, my dear—father, I may well say," said Marciana, kissing his still unfurrowed brow; "how much good you have done me, I acknowledge it gladly."

Relaxing her self-command for an instant, she yielded to her feelings; and a tear, that welled up from an old source, glittered in the sunshine of gratitude.

"My dearest child, you need not thank me; if my



old age enjoys the purest happiness, and the lustre of a lovely woman's soul illumines the autumn of my life, whom have I to thank but you?"

"Do not thank me, father; to you your Amazon is indebted for the healing of her wound."

"Ah! yet ever the Amazon?"

"Well, you know that is the only way to guard against being wounded again, to be independent."

"Phew! phew!" laughed Van Walborch, getting up and walking about the room; "Amazons have changed their minds before now—Herodotus can tell you that. Yes, I will find a time to tell you all about it; it is very useful information for stiff-necked people."

"Bah! other people's experience. . . ."

"Does not create, but stimulates. But I will tell you one thing: I begin to be sure about my Amazon; yes, I am so already; but I must tell you about it when Aisma is with us. What has come over him, by the way?"

"He is certainly quite absorbed in his work."

"We will go to-day and pull him out of his studio."

"No; I must go presently and look after Ada again."

Marciana rose, and took a round object wrapped up in paper from a cupboard.

"What have you got there?"

"Un polo! un pollastro," said she, gaily.

"A fowl; where did you get that?"

"I bought it at a poulterer's in passing, and am now going to make some nice broth for the patient."

He nodded kindly, and thought: "Energetic, whimsical, and yet charming creature; and she pretends to be hard and stoical! Oh, my Amazon, your heart is full of tenderness, which you strive to conceal! And there is no doubt, either, that that man loves her dearly; and yet he too is obstinacy itself. How am I to get those two stiff wills to bend?"

When Marciana had carefully prepared Ada's broth, she took it to her. She was received with tender gratitude, and found the sufferer more tranquil. After having spent an hour with her, Marciana took her departure. When she returned she quickly made some alterations in her toilet—placed a fresh rose in her bosom, and appeared in Van Walborch's presence with some gaiety.

"Come, you have just time to take your favorite walk."

Van Walborch was ready, and pleased to go. The walk consisted in an hour's stroll before dinner on Mount Pincio. This was his daily custom.

Mount Pincio is a beautifully-wooded hill at the northern end of the city; beside it is the Porto del Popolo, the first through which, in former times, every stranger entered the eternal city; and at its feet, without the lofty wall, are the evergreen oaks and crown-bearing pines of the Villa Borghese. At its base, to the townward side, lies the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, near to the spot where Nero was buried and evil spirits resorted. Here are now enthroned Pinturicchio's Madonnas and Raphael's Elijah. In the Piazza del Popolo rises the obelisk of Heliopolis, which was dedicated to

the sun by Augustus, and adorned with a cross by Sixtus V. It is surrounded by four Egyptian lionesses. Close by are seen Neptune and his Tritons, and Rome with the Tiber and the Anio. On the old Roman "hill of gardens," the scene of Lucullus' banquets and Messalina's excesses, now moves the fashionable world of Rome; an image of that cosmopolitan many-sidedness, which distinguishes the Rome of to-day.

Here our friends walked listening to the music, steering their way through the stream of passengers and carriages, turning into the quieter avenues adorned with busts of Italy's great men, or enjoying the view over the city. For hence the eye wanders over the cupolas and lofty buildings, over the low-arched roof of the Pantheon, while St. Angelo Castle and St. Peter's dome are visible from every quarter. Beyond are the mountains and the Campagna, where we trace the aqueduct of Acqua Paolo, the pines of the Villa Doria-Pamfili. Eternal Rome has also this intransitory feature that she is ever new and entralling to behold.

"*Daimonion ptoliethron!*" said Van Walborch, softly; "daimoniac city."

"Now what is the meaning of daimoniac?" asked Marciana.

"It is untranslatable. It means demoniac in a good sense; that inexplicable, secret, god-like power and mastery, to which we cannot choose but submit. Pindar uses it of Athens; Rome owns it also."

At this moment they saw Aisma, who descried them also, and approached them at once.

"*Caro mio!*" exclaimed Van Walborch. "What have you been doing with yourself? We have not seen you for ever so many days."

Aisma answered that he had been working hard. As Marciana gave him her hand, the thought suddenly shot through her brain: Could it be that *he* had this daimonic power? while Aisma was feeling with renewed force that *she* possessed it indeed.

"Here is some news, my friend; the Amazon has been keeping me busy too; and I have it—I have it; she shall succumb, I said, and I have it now."

And, taking Aisma's arm, Van Walborch continued:

"To-morrow I shall take possession of you for the whole day. Call for us; we shall drive first to the Vatican, then to the Capitol to see the various Amazons; you will dine with us, and in the evening I will tell you everything."

## CHAPTER XV.

IN seeing great art collections there is always a time of unrest that must be got over before we can begin to enjoy. At first we are overwhelmed by the multiplicity and novelty of the impressions; the allurements of what is yet to be seen draws us aside from the quiet contemplation of what is immediately before us. But if a man know his way among these treasures, if he has seen much just in order to have seen it and to carry away a general impression, when he repeats his visit he passes

by a great number of things, and returns to the most important objects to obtain new views on them, to see them in every mood. Then, and then only, comes the time for quiet enjoyment.

So it was with Van Walborch and Marciana, who often sauntered through the galleries with Aisma and Askol the sculptor. They were now quite at home there, and did not hurry onwards to see everything at one visit. They examined what interested them most, either exchanging their ideas regarding it, or absorbed in their own reflections.

They were now in the Vatican, and had walked through the Rotunda, the hall of the Muses, the halls of the animals, and were making a short cut to the Galleria delle statue. Aisma lingered involuntarily in front of the Eros after Praxiteles.

"Look," said he to Marciana; "the wings have been broken off. This is lasting, not fleeting love."

"That is why he is looking at the ground so dejectedly."

Askol was not to be torn away from the Apollo Sauroktonos, whose modern elegance had a special charm for him. But Van Walborch called him to look at an Amazon. It was the one usually considered the most beautiful, the one from the Villa Mattei. She is resting on her right leg; her right arm is raised, the left hangs down by her side, and both hands grasp a bow. Beside her lie a helm, a semicircular shield, and an axe; on her left foot we see the spur strap.

"Good, truly," said the sculptor; "but both those

arms and the right leg have been restored. Oh, those wretched restorations, how they hamper and confuse us!"

Van Walborch jotted down a few notes. Then they passed through the Cortile and the long Chiaramonti hall just as if they were ordinary streets, and made their way to the Braccio Nuovo. But they were hardly allowed to admire the beautiful Augustus, the austere Minerva Giustiniani, the Caryatide, or to cast a passing glance upon a duplicate of the above-named Amazon.

"Just the same thing over again," said Askol; "cover these hands a moment, then it is obvious that she was never meant to have a bow in them, but that she is supporting herself with both hands on a spear, preparatory to taking a leap."

Van Walborch drew him away by the arm to the two statues he had come especially to see.

"You, man of the craft, first examine for me this wounded Amazon, and then that statue yonder, the Spearman of Polycletus, and tell me if I am right in judging them to be both by the same hand. We shall presently see another example of this Amazon in the Capitol, more beautiful by far, and then the likeness will strike you still more. But here we have this example at hand to compare it with the Spearman."

A word of explanation regarding these statues. The wounded Amazon represents a young and powerfully-built woman; the figure rests on the right leg, the left is slightly bent. The left hand removes the drapery from the right breast, the right arm is uplifted, the slightly-

bent head is turned a little towards the wounded breast. It is a beautiful statue, full of simplicity and power, but from the standpoint of art her Capitoline sister, identical in posture, is so much finer that only there can we regard her with unreserved admiration. What Van Walborch wanted was to compare her with the Spearman or Doryphorus. This statue, restored by a mistake as a Discobolus, represents a man in the prime of life, in the act of stepping forward, balanced for the moment on his right leg. His left fore-arm is raised, his right arm hangs down straight. It is one of the most beautiful male figures extant. How solidly the body is modelled; how elastically the trunk is poised on the hips; how gentle that slope of the right ankle, which sustains the weight of the whole! The shoulders and chest are cast in the large mould of the best Hellenic art. Every point of the figure displays balance, harmony, the perfection of strength. Here is no athlete with artificial muscular formation. This man has been born thus, and is merely harmoniously developed. These are also the finest male limbs to be found here, very far superior to the Apoxyomenos, the Mercury, the Adonis. The execution is so masterly that it is scarcely possible to believe it a copy. As, however, the original by Polycletus was in bronze, he who copied it must have been a master. The limbs and the lower part of the figure look as if they had been originally modelled for marble, and from the life. Words cannot convey an idea of the air of soft fleshiness, which does away with every thought of a hard metal.

The four enthusiastic admirers now busied themselves in comparing their impressions of the two statues.

The sculptor entertained no doubt whatever that the Spearman and the Amazon were of the same school, of the same material—nay, that they showed the very same treatment of the marble.

Highly gratified at this conclusion, Mr. van Walborch said: "Now we will go to the Capitoline Amazon; but you must do me one favor—do not look about you any more, so as to preserve your impressions intact."

"Then you must blindfold us," said Marciana.

"No, no; you must not look round. Look straight before you at the floor until we get outside."

"But the floors themselves have beautiful mosaics," said Marciana, laughing.

"Don't look at anything whatever, then," said Van Walborch, earnestly. And he walked off with half-closed eyes; while the others followed, jesting and teasing.

"Take care," said Marciana to Aisma, who now and then stole a glance at her; "you must not look at me, either."

They walked quickly through the halls, and drove to the Capitol. Van Walborch prevented them from looking at the Marcus Aurelius in the square, pushed them to the left up the stairs and through the halls, and dragged them past the Amazon with the bow, that is identical with the one in the Vatican. At last they reached the great hall, in the centre of which stand the two black marble Centaurs by Aristeas and Papias. To



the left, against the wall and near a window, stands the wounded Amazon, also identical with that of the Vatican.

"This is *my* Amazon," exclaimed Van Walborch, with fervor. "Now look at my Amazon!"

There is no doubt about it; this example surpasses all others in beauty. Every quality they had admired in the other was present here in a higher degree. In marbles we may observe something similar to what we find in those paintings whose colors do not impress us as being mere pigments. The material vanishes, and the impression we receive is that of life, of reality. In other words, the material medium does not oppose itself between the work of art and the spectator, and the soul of the creative artist speaks directly to the soul of the gazer. Then painters say that a picture is "without paint." This is also the case with sculpture. In a statue the nude may be beautifully and faithfully rendered, and yet not possess *this* quality. The limbs of the Apollo Belvidere cannot serve for an illustration, because this statue is meant for an ideal rather than a copy of nature, and besides, it retains a suggestion of the bronze original. But those of the Antinous, for instance, of the Lizard-slayer, of the Capitoline Venus, are charming in their beauty and truth to nature; their art would scarcely admit of improvement, yet there are others which are just—different. This cannot be regarded as the result of great technical finish; those other examples are no less technically beautiful, but it is due to the sensitive hand of the modeller. That the finger that moulded them was responsive

to the feeling of the artist is manifest; and the marble has this advantage over bronze, that it reproduces the softness and transparency of the flesh.

So with the Spearman and this Amazon. Here the immense superiority of Greek art is conspicuous, compared with the Roman copies and imitations. In this statue of the Amazon the Greek spirit still breathes from every line. It must be Greek work. If Sosikles—that word carved in the marble—be the name of him who copied this from Polycletus' bronze, he was a great sculptor himself. The Faun after Praxiteles is fine, but, compared with this Amazon, it is somewhat affected; the Antinous is beautiful, but too elegant. This Amazon, also, is no figure formed gymnastically in the Palaestra; her grandeur and beauty are hers by nature. She has no need to affect elegance like the Antinous and the Faun; she makes no effort to be beautiful, for she is so. It is a very different order of beauty from that which in these later times we are accustomed to honor as the type and acme. She has no small, graceful head, no slender limbs, no tiny feet, no sloping shoulders and swelling hips; every part is well-proportioned in strength and in simplicity. Strongly built, she stands with full-grown limbs and firm, large feet, for the foot must not be small if the rest of the figure is robust.\* The waist has the slenderness of the virgin; the lower limbs rank with the finest female statues in the world.

In Askol's opinion antiques were always too calm.

\* Although some parts have been restored, the proportions are clearly discernible.

His fiery spirit required more strongly marked and mobile forms, more pathetic exaggeration, more life and soul, as he erroneously termed it. Van Walborch constantly remonstrated against this idea.

“*That* life and *that* soul are continually overstepping the limits of the sculpturesque,” he said. “There is no want of soul in the antiques; there is a stronger and a deeper one than we moderns usually conceive of. We have only to know and feel it. Vehemence is not always soul, but very often ostentation; and sculpture is out of place in the world of sentiment and dramatic excitement; it belongs to that of plastic repose and sublimity.”

“Come,” he said, “we have had enough.”

“May we look at nothing more, even here?”

“Why should you? Come!”

So they passed out quickly without observing that Marciana had lingered behind alone. Not till they were at the foot of the stairs did they become aware of it and retrace their steps. Van Walborch found her in a corner of the Stanza del Fauno; she did not perceive him. Marciana had contemplated the Amazon, her image, with far other feelings than evoked in Van Walborch. She was standing, lost in thought, by a round altar, on which stood a head of Bacchus. The altar bore the inscription: *Ara Tranquillitatis* (altar of tranquillity). She stood leaning her hand upon it and musing.

“What, child, beside that altar again?”

She started, smiled a smile devoid of mirth, and said:

"I felt a craving to offer my devotions here."

"For shame, intractable Amazon!"

She took his hand and pressed it.

"Is it not well for me to strive after Horace's equanimity?"

He shook his head.

"Not in this way, my child."

"Hush!" she said, for the others were just approaching them.

They now drove home to meet again at dinner.

Before evening closed in Marciana went to see Ada, whom she now visited daily. When she came back she found the three gentlemen deep in the discussion of art questions. Van Walborch had brought out all his prints of Amazons. The conversation, however, was interrupted by her entrance.

"How is she?" asked Aisma.

"Much better; more tranquil."

"As soon as she is recovered I will set her drawing. She has no creative talent, but she can copy, and I will help her. There are so many occupations that would be suitable for a woman. For instance, the decorating of all manner of articles. She might find in that a source of enjoyment as well as of useful work. Her mind must be employed and diverted."

"I thank you," said Marciana; with a full, deep glance. "But am I too late to hear anything about the Amazon?"

We will give an abstract of the conversation that had taken place :

The Amazons form an interesting portion of antique mythology and art. The "man-resembling Amazons" of Homer are mentioned more or less by numerous Hellenic and Latin poets. The warlike, "unbreasted" female warriors figure on hundreds of monuments, and in many a statue. Besides those already mentioned there are others in the museums at Naples and at Paris. At Vienna there is a glorious fragment, the dying Amazon with drooping head, a work of the Transition period that preceded Phidias. The ancient authors mention a number of artists who sculptured Amazons. Strongylion modelled one, which was called *euknemos*, because of the beauty of its limbs. It was specially admired by Nero. Lastly, there were four artists, of whom Pliny tells the following anecdote :

"There was to be a competition for an Amazon to adorn the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, and the competitors were Polycletus, the great sculptor of the school of Argos, Phidias the Athenian, Kresilas, an artist of Cydonia, and Phradmon of Argos. It was thought that the self-confidence of the great artist would cause each to give the preference to his own statue; so it was decreed that the prize should be awarded to the one they judged the best after their own. It turned out that each accorded the second rank to Polycletus. The story has the same value that all anecdotes of artists, whether old or new, usually have. For us its interest consists in the names mentioned."

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"Having examined the archæological material," said Van Walborch, "let us now lay that aside. Students in debating questions of ancient art have always attached too much importance to archæology. Art questions must, in the last instance, be tried by art-feeling and art-training alone, the artistic method must take the precedence."

"Perfectly true," said Aïsma; "we have seen that already in the Pompeian paintings, and I have often thought the same about painted vases. They are never considered from a strictly artistic point of view."

"It is so, indeed."

"One judges of the genuineness of a drawing or painting by the hand, not by extraneous reasons. One must feel instinctively whether it is genuine or not."

"Let us do likewise. And then for our first question we have only two names to deal with, Phidias and Polycletus. Their statues were of bronze, and those we saw, copies in marble — the Amazon of Phidias leaned on her spear; concerning the posture of that of Polycletus we know nothing. What I want you now to call to mind is the likeness in style, treatment, and art — character which is rarely deceptive — between the Spearman and *my Amazon*. Well, the Spearman is certainly by Polycletus. This artist we know sufficiently well. It is said of him that he rather gave a faithful rendering of the dignified beauty of the human frame than the majesty of the gods. His realism was therefore no unworthy coarseness. He was an idealist too; he avoided representing the human body in the decay of

age, he portrayed only youthful figures, or, as Quintilian more picturesquely says: 'He did not go beyond the blooming cheeks.' His figures, it is said, were quadrata. Celsus teaches us what that *square* means. The best formed bodies, he says, are quadrata, neither stout nor thin, and of proportionate length. Quadratus, then, is not our idea of square; it means nothing clumsy, but the just proportion of strength and full development. Lysippus is contrasted with Polycletus as making his figures more slender and graceful. The figures of Polycletus were thus powerful, robust, and large, the perfection of the beautiful human shape, without the later refinement of more slender forms. It was another of his peculiarities that his statues rested on one leg. Every one of these characteristics is found in the Spearman, but at the same time. . . ."

"Say no more — we understand; the Amazon displays the very same character."

"Is it not so? Have you any further doubt that my Amazon is a work of the Argive School, a work of the same hand that made the Spearman, the Hera of Naples, a work of the robust school — not of the over-refined and over-elegant later art? It is instinct with that strong, broad, perfect humanity, just a little idealized in its perfection, that distinguishes Polycletus. My Amazon is not by Kresilas, but by Polycletus."

Mr. van Walborch paced up and down the room, excited by his idea. He then again took up the beautiful photograph of the statue. Aisma had followed his whole argument with pleasure, and shared in his enthusiasm.

Askol, however, thought the discussion much too long. He was more practical than speculative, and too fiery by nature for contemplative rapture. Marciana had also been listening with interest, but whether out of that feminine restlessness that is incapable of settling long to a single subject, or from some other reason, she let Askol draw her aside, and they were soon in animated conversation.

Aisma saw that their discourse was lively; the sculptor gesticulated as if he were modelling her figure; his hands touched her hair and pointed to something there; he made gestures as if he were draping a robe about her shoulders and waist; he took hold of her hands and arms. The painter heard something about bands in the hair and a purple rose. Meanwhile she laughed, and allowed herself to be treated thus, and in the end even permitted the sculptor to kiss her hand.

These familiarities were far from pleasing to Aisma, and, when he left in company with Askol, he walked beside him in silence to his own door.

Man's heart is a curious mixture. Through the folds of his brain thoughts seemed to drift and to change as confusedly and capriciously as clouds in the vault of heaven. Had he not resolved to have nothing to do with love? He was confident that he had not the slightest thought of desiring Marciana for his wife, much as he might admire her. Well, then, what could it matter to him that another man should desire to marry her, that she allowed that other to raise his eyes to her, that she associated with him without constraint?



"Every woman is a coquette," said he to himself, with a groan; "and *she* certainly is one."

## CHAPTER XVI.

MARCIANA, on that evening of animated discourse with Askol, had been making some arrangements with him for the feast to be given in his studio in honor of Salviati. They had proposed it should be a classic feast, at which every one was to appear in antique costume. Askol's studios in the baths of Diocletian afforded a unique banquet-hall, which would be in perfect harmony with classic manners and surroundings. Marciana had planned some theatricals with Askol, and had written for them a few stanzas of poetry. Some male friends, and some married and unmarried ladies among Askol's American and German acquaintances, had agreed to take parts. Accustomed to be quite free in her movements, Marciana went out one morning, called a *vet-turino* on the Piazza di Spagna, and drove to the baths of Diocletian. She found Askol downstairs busy at work on his Amazon group.

"Ha!" said Askol, in joyful surprise; "*scusate*, I cannot give you my hand, it is all over clay; but may I offer you my elbow?"

Marciana shook it laughingly.

"Beautiful," she said. "So that is going to be very good."

Askol lifted the damp cloth from the Amazon, who was now seen in all the glory of her lovely figure. Like true artists, they spoke frankly about her forms. Marciana praised them. Askol, however, was disconsolate.

"Yes; there is something good to be made of it, something above the common; the posture and the expression are both successful, and not commonplace; but the arms and shoulders and that foot puzzle me. Oh, you don't know half the troubles of sculptors! Good models, especially female ones, are so hard to get; and yet we cannot model the forms of a figure out of our head. Let me speak plainly to you: you understand that the women to be found for that purpose do not always possess noble and, above all, pure forms. The hands are rarely noble; see, that foot is bad, that arm and shoulder-joint are vulgar. If I want them otherwise I must either imitate ancient models, or I must idealize; and then one so soon gets conventional. I had wished to do something individual, to elevate my art above the everyday and hackneyed. Ah! I see no chance of succeeding!"

Marciana had seated herself, after viewing the group from every side. She was enraptured, for, despite Askol's dissatisfaction with a portion of his work, the main outlines of the group were wonderfully beautiful.

"What a gift, to build up such forms out of clay, or, like the God of Michael Angelo in the Sistina, to beckon them up out of the earth with one's finger! I can see that you are living close to the Sistine wonders of crea-

tion. And yet this is different from Michael Angelo's Titans. This woman is quite modern, or rather a creation of the modern mind. Nay, Askol, this work will establish your name; you have never done anything like this. You have produced something quite peculiar, quite extraordinary."

"No, no!" said Askol; "that *might*, that *ought* to have been; but it will not be. Look! see this and that; those forms are coarse; I perceive and dream how it ought to be; but, as I have said, a man cannot make a statue out of his head; he wants a noble reality to work from. But how can I get it? This will remain a half-work like the others; I shall not grasp the laurels you hold out to me in the distance."

Marciana sat plunged in deep thought. Suddenly she said:

"What was that story of the ancient world about the women who volunteered to sit to a sculptor?"

"That happened to a painter, to Zeuxis," said Askol, adding with a sigh, "Ah! that is just why the antiques are so far above us. No respectable woman would do that now."

He tossed down a bit of clay, which he had been turning about in his hand, with a despondent gesture, then took the arm from the socket into which it was fastened, and flung it into a corner, where the clay collapsed into a shapeless mass. He passed his hand through his hair and across his brow, held it before his eyes, and sat down wearily.

Marciana greatly admired Askol's talents. She

watched with interest the progress of a work on which the young man's fame and future depended.

They both sat without speaking a word.

As if awakening slowly, Marciana raised her eyes and said : " Askol !"

He dropped his hand from his eyes and looked up.

" Askol !" she repeated. She looked at him a while, and then with throbbing pulses she continued : " I admire your talent. I know, I feel, that there is in you a great and glorious future. I know also that for an artist this future depends on a single brilliant work. I see that this will, must be such a work. I see the future of an artist's life and the influence he might exercise on art hanging by a silken thread. For no sooner does an artist despair than he loses the proud audacity without which he cannot produce anything great."

Her blue eyes dilated and sparkled, and her lips took the proud curve of the Juno Ludovisi.

" Askol, one question, one bold, unusual question, which I should not dare to put to any one but you alone."

He looked half-amazed, half-frightened ; he fancied something he dared not dream of.

" Yes ?"

" Do you love me ?"

Askol had expected something else, and dropped from lofty ether into the commonplace.

" Marciana, how can a man help loving you ?"

She rose and stamped her foot passionately.

"Good heavens! how contemptibly silly you men can be! I meant something else, something very serious, something dangerous, almost impossible — something that the first low mind would call coarse, but that I dare because I know it to be noble, and because my religion is rooted in the sublime earnestness of beauty; something that I desire, because I wish you to do something great, not for your own sake, but for that of sacred art, and I would have done it because—because—well, because I am I. But let it be, it is not needed. Farewell."

Askol grasped her hand and craved forgiveness.

"May I ask you a question now?"

Marciana bent her head in assent.

"What did you mean by that question?"

"I wished to know whether you like me as a good friend, frankly as a comrade, or whether you love me, would perhaps ask my hand — and, come, to speak frankly, as between artists — if you look on me with desire?"

The very unusual situation, the power, the gravity of Marciana's look and tone again upraised Askol into a loftier mood.

"Marciana, we have been intimate friends these three years; I must once more repeat, but this time without any idea of a conventional phrase, that no man can be utterly indifferent to you. And yet — I will tell you the honest truth — I seek neither your hand nor your love, and if I say that I admire your beauty, that in my eyes you have the most magnificently formed figure imaginable, I see it with the eye of an artist only;

my heart and my troth are elsewhere. Do you believe me ?”

“ I do believe you,” said Marciana, looking him firmly in the face : “ you speak the truth ; you are too much of a *man* not to do that. Well, then, I know what you require, but would never dare to ask me, and what, indeed, you would have no right to ask. I know— why this foolish bashfulness among artists ? — that I have beautiful forms. You can have me for what you need in your Amazon. I consider this as a sacred sacrifice to art.”

Askol blushed, but Marciana did not. His eyes filled with tears, and he would fain have thrown himself at her feet. He clasped her hand and faltered :

“ Thanks, a thousand thanks, my good friend, my dear comrade.”

Nothing more could be said after that. There are heroic deeds that men do, but cannot talk of. They both felt this must remain something far above realistic things ; that it must be maintained at an ideal height, which might be lowered by a single word ; that this act must afterwards become as a myth melting away into the unreal.

Marciana only said :

“ Askol, you know that no one in the every-day world, where the sacred dignity of art is unknown, would be able to comprehend what prompted me. Your hand, then, on the preservation of absolute secrecy, and — afterwards even between us let it be forgotten as if it had not been. Send me a white lily

in the evening, and on the following morning I will come."

Marciana departed. She was unconscious of all things around her. She scarcely felt the ground beneath her feet. A proud exaltation had taken complete possession of her. The Amazon had strength, and the nobility of her nature was predominant over all baser elements.

## CHAPTER XVII.

ONE evening Askol's studio was transformed into a festive hall. Already from the Piazza delle Terme could be seen the high outer staircase lighted, *à giorno*, with colored lamps. When Aisma entered the room he was amazed, for what he saw was a surprise. In the large, brightly-illuminated hall he beheld as it were one of his own pictures, a Roman feast, nothing but togas and pallia and wreathed foreheads, not a vestige of modern costume. Askol walked up laughing and said:

"You cannot show your face here in that guise, barbarian, with your black clothes and your gloves."

He led him into another room, where he wound a wreath of oak-leaves about his head and flung an ample purple toga over his shoulders. This costume was not strange or awkward to the painter, for he was accustomed to drape his models in that way, and was intimately acquainted with the fashion of the antique robes and the manner in which they were worn. Though his fair

moustache was Germanic, he looked the most Roman of all the company, with his clear-cut, powerful profile, his hair, with its oak-leaf wreath falling a little over the forehead, and the grace with which he flung the ends of the toga over his left shoulder. He was introduced thus to the assembled guests. Some he could scarcely recognize at the first glance. A little figure hopped up to him, its head concealed in ivy-leaves, and a red mantle enveloping its limbs. The crutches alone declared it to be Salviati. At the first glance he had scarcely recognized Marciana. It was the time when the lovely terracotta statuettes of Tanagra began to be known and admired. Van Walborch had succeeded in acquiring some of those charming Boeotian women, and Marciana had costumed herself as one of these.

In the very posture so often represented, the long himation covering the whole figure, with one hand protruding from the folds, holding a leaf-shaped fan, and the other grasping the folds of the robe and concealed by them, she stood laughing in front of him. The broad-brimmed, pointed Boeotian hat covered her head. Van Walborch, with his fine beardless face and masses of grey hair, looked like a Roman emperor on a coin.

The moving mass of toga-robed men, and women in bright-colored pallia, with loose tresses or tower-shaped coiffures, gay with flowers and green wreaths, was as surprising as it was picturesque. Three tables arranged triclinium-wise were placed alongside of the wall of the room. They were loaded with cakes, fruits, and the graceful, long-necked wicker-flasks of the coun-



try. Glasses and every species of table-furniture were huddled together in the disorder to be expected from an artist and a bachelor.

After the first greetings were over, Askol took a patera—in point of fact it was a vessel meant to hold fruit—and pouring out a libation on the floor, drank to his guests. He proposed to name a master of the ceremonies, and the dice, helped possibly by a little dexterous management, pointed out Salviati as king of the feast. He was borne in triumph to the canopied seat at the head of the table. In his lively, gay Italian he invited the guests to seat themselves and witness some theatricals. One of the musicians among the party played a prelude on the piano, while from the ceiling there fluttered down upon the spectators a rain of comically illustrated programmes. The curtain in the background rose, and displayed a raised platform fitted up as a stage.

It showed a wood with savage rocks and aloes, improvised with those slender but ingenious means known to artists. The light simulated moonshine, and a great full moon shone on the canvas at the back of the scene.

There entered a wild band of Corybantes, little Dactyli, goat-footed Silerni, and nymphs with torches, tambourines, and flutes.

The herald, bearing his staff of office, stood in front of the stage and proclaimed :

“Savage ravine in Phrygia; the realm of King Midas. Chorus of Corybantes and Satyrs; Silenus, prophet of Midas; Marsyas, priest and flute-player in

the service of Rhea-Cybele, the earth-mother, whose feast is about to be celebrated."

Then stepped forth the Satyr Marsyas, his limbs hung with goat-skins, and said :

Fair nymph and priest, in a band they go,  
To the wild beast's lair, to the mountain peak,  
The mad delights of thy sacred rites,  
Cybele, mother of earth, they seek.

Let the madd'ning juice of Bacchus flow,  
Flame high, ye torches ! ye flute-notes sound !  
The tambour's beat shall set free their feet ;  
Nature shall revel unchain'd, unbound.

These verses, written by Marciana, had been translated by a German poet into his own tongue. After Marsyas had spoken them, the whole company broke out into a wild dance. The Panpipes shrieked, torches were waved, and tambourines loudly clattered.

Second scene: the same region, suffused with brilliant sunlight as Apollo enters. Marsyas, sitting at the foot of a tree, produces comical and whimsical sounds on his flute.

The herald announces : "The match between Apollo and Marsyas. King Midas, completely clad in gold, as arbiter." From Apollo's cithara came forth the sound of a grand hymn, which alternated with a mocking parody from Marsyas' flute.

Apollo sings :

Zeus on high ; chaste Artemis ;  
Delos, where my temple is ;  
Human Psyche grown divine ;  
Yours, this golden song of mine. . . .

May the silver arrows fly  
 To Python's poison'd progeny ;  
 May my light shine not in vain,  
 Effacing sin and healing pain ;  
 Grant, the mean and base laid low,  
 Beauty's beams for aye may glow.

In answer came the rival chant of Marsyas :

Enough of Zeus, of Artemis ; O vain  
 Council of gods or Muses' band to please ;  
 And ev'n Apollo. Cypris and her train,  
 The great god Pan, we claim no more than these.

From the deceiving vessels, wherein lay  
 Mysteries of priestcraft, we the covers tore.  
 Away, ye outworn creeds of Art, away !  
 Cant of æsthetic-ethereal lore.

Unto the great god Pan is homage due ;  
 Lo, when he comes a fragrance fills the air !  
 (The Beautiful must fade before the True)—  
 Than tendrilled ringlet seems his beard more fair.

Midas then appears as art critic :

I am King Midas, who cannot suit  
 My hand to brush or chisel or lute ;  
 Yet have the good gods given to me  
 An ear to hear and an eye to see.  
 I lean to none of your sects or schools ;  
 For this I hold : that to criticise  
 A man makes use of his ears and eyes,  
 Not of a bundle of other folks' rules.  
 Now, this song Apollo has sung to me  
 Pleases me not in the least degree.  
 First, it's as tame as tame can well be ;  
 Second, its full of plagiary.  
 It's wholly wanting in Attic salt,  
 And, somehow, the metre is at fault.

"Beauty," "Ideals," and "the Intense" !  
Much sound there is, and but little sense.  
We want what's new, tho' it's pornoplastic,  
Rough, harsh, cynical, coarse, and drastic,  
Don't shrink away from the common stuff,—  
It's natural; that, you know, 's enough.  
Apollo's played out quite, so I pass  
The crown of poet to Marsyas.

Third scene: Satyrs and Sileni dance wildly about Marsyas. The Graces, gliding along hand in hand, surround Phœbus Apollo. The Muses crown him with laurel. From Midas' head are seen sprouting a pair of huge ass's ears. Apollo orders Marsyas to be flayed.

The herald steps forward and says:

Thus, though the modern Midases to Marsyas give their favor,  
Muses and Graces still Phœbus the laurel assign.

Then he takes another step forward and remarks in an ironical aside:

But yet it avails not; Apollo repents of his sentence,  
Since, though Marsyas fell, his Silenus race flourishes ever.

*(The Curtain Falls.)*

Laughing bravos and merry talk followed. Some maintained the rights of criticism even against Phœbus; some defended realism in art, others scoffed at it; some thought Apollo's anatomical reply rather sanguinary, others pronounced it the best that an Olympian could make to a satyr. Some, to tease Marciana, remarked that the performance, in point of fact, cut its own throat, because, after all, it acknowledged the rights of the *satire*.

Amidst this merry exchange of witticisms, young girls dressed as nymphs handed round baskets of fruit, while Hebes poured nectar. Then Askol made a speech to Salviati, wishing him many happy returns of his birthday, and presented him with a harpsichord in the name of his many friends. It was the result of the tom-bola they had made for him.

This evoked a storm of applause, to which Salviati, much affected, responded by shaking hands all round.

Then the attention of the company was once more directed to the stage. When the curtain rose a magnificent scene was disclosed.

On a bench against the ramparts of the Skaian gate, the blue sky for a background, the Trojan Fathers were seated around Priam. In the foreground, her foot on the topmost step of the gate-stairs, stood Helen in her flowing robes, a delicate, transparent veil thrown over her tresses, her eyes downcast. Thus she appeared before the admiring greybeards. Behind her walked her two maidens.

Aisma was amazed; what he saw was his own unfinished picture. But what struck him no less was the figure of Helen, in which he recognized Marciana. Bravos and applause greeted the beautiful tableau, and from tongue to tongue passed the name of the painter, whose fame had already blossomed in the West, but who celebrated his first Roman triumph this evening.

When the performers rejoined the spectators, Marciana, who was still wearing her Helen costume, approached Aisma, and said:

"It was allowable, I hope? You are not offended with me for making your beautiful picture public, even though it might be a little premature?"

"Oh no, not in the least," he said, cordially; "the very reverse. I take it as a compliment, and I must say you have grasped the idea well. Nay, I have learned something myself; for one thing, I now know exactly how my Helen must look. But for the freedom you have taken I must inflict a slight punishment. The dæmoniac Helen has ventured within my circle, and as a *thaumaturgus* I hold her fast. Now, you cannot escape without promising to let me paint your portrait; nay, properly speaking, I must have you dressed just as you are now, to sit to me for my Helen."

"Well, well," said Marciana, smiling, but yet not giving an assent — "*vedremo*."

"Why do you refuse so obstinately? It is not at all kind of you."

"I did not refuse. I only said *vedremo*. My uncle has set his heart on having your picture; you will not part with it without speaking to him, will you?"

"Well, well," said Aisma, mocking her tone — "*vedremo*. Will you sing us something?"

"Oh!" she said — and her mouth took a doubtful expression — "I would rather not. I can sing nothing but serious old things: these are scarcely in place here."

In the dense throng of guests, among whom were many musicians, painters, and men of letters, their conversation was soon interrupted. Aisma was touched

to see the little figure of Salviati in the red toga, hopping about among the gay crowd, always lively and contented, welcomed everywhere; even by young girls, who so easily permit themselves to fall into unmerciful mockery, he was treated with the greatest cordiality — nay, with honor. There was something pathetic about it, but at the same time something that did the heart good. Salviati now seated himself at the grand piano, and sang a number of humorous Italian songs. After that some modern operatic music was performed. Marciana let herself be persuaded to sing, but not until she felt it impossible to refuse any longer. She knew and acknowledged that light, airy music is preferable on such occasions; but the depth and fulness of her natural tones, and her views regarding poetry and music, made it natural that she should give the preference to serious art. Still she did not wish to be inexorable to her host's entreaties. Askol played the accompaniment. The listening circle gazed at the impressive figure in her Helen costume. She had, however, laid aside her veil, and they could admire the proud head, the masses of golden hair, entwined with bands of pale lilac, and fastened with a single dark red rose.

The grave, severely simple opening notes breaking into the noisy gaiety, caused some surprise at first. In her metallic alto she sang Pergolese's *Siciliana*, "*Tre giorni son 'che Nina.*" The listeners were soon under the influence of those minor notes, impressed by the swell and the broad undulations of the musical rhythms. After that she sang Mozart's "*Veilchen.*"

What music there is in such songs! and how admirably they were rendered—pure song, devoid of declamation! As Aisma told her afterwards, it was like the painting of the old Italians, like a Signorelli, a Leonardo. So silver-pure of line, so naïve and yet so powerful in structure.

A few *cognoscenti* complimented her on the way in which she had entered into and reproduced the spirit of the songs. But the young people were more inclined for mirth.

Scarcely had Salviati struck up a spirited waltz before the feet were set in motion in accord with the young hearts, and were gliding through the hall in the mazes of the graceful dance.

When the dance had continued for a time the lights on the walls were suddenly extinguished, and the large flower-wreathed chandelier alone gave light to the hall. The piano was hushed. On the edge of the stage sat a guitar-player, and a boy was tuning his mandoline; the ankle of his one leg resting on the knee of the other, in the exact posture of the little figure in Carpaccio's picture at Bologna.

For the northerner who knows Italy there lies in those two simple instruments a charm which haunts him after his return to his native land, and when he happens to hear them his heart throbs high in longing after the land of Mignon. They sing to him in imitation of her words:

I know it too, the land where golden citrons grow,  
Where crimson cactus burneth, where oleanders blow !



Sometimes, if strolling in the evening among the poorer quarters of his northern city, he suddenly hears in the distance notes that resemble that music, it may happen to him that he is irresistibly attracted towards it, to find a despised piano-organ, the detestation of musicians. Poor children with shabby shoes are dancing about it on the rough pavement, yet the man who has once tasted the magic cup of Circe-Italy feels the enchantment overmaster him; a nameless longing seizes his heart, and his soul melts within him. For these tones are those of the guitar and mandoline; in these tones live Naples with its bay, Vesuvius, and orange-scented Amalfi; on these tones drifts floating Venice with her sun-embrowned palaces, their steps laved by the water of the Canale Grande, while their lace-veiled heads rise up into the blue heavens; Venice with her bronzes by Sansovino, with Bellini's delicate-handed women, and the antique steeds soaring above the mosaics of St. Mark. These tones conjure up the splendor of Arno's City of Flowers, the miracles of Ghiberti and Mino, of Lucca della Robbia and Michael Angelo, where the *faccchino* can drop asleep leaning against a bronze by Cellini. These tones call up the majestic Campagna, with her *contadini* resting in the cool of the evening, and unique Rome. And at the listener's heart gnaws the sweetly painful yearning after the Paradise with bronze doors made by Ghiberti.

Merrily now sounded the tinkling of the stringed instruments, played by the man with the guitar and the boy with the mandoline.

"*Tarantella! tarantella!*" cried the young people, and several couples were soon formed. The *tarantella* is a series of improvisations which the two dancers perform now alone, now facing each other, now linked together, in obedience to the rhythmic modulations of the instruments. It is one of those primitive popular dances which, free as the popular song, has not yet been bound down to settled rules. Here all depends on grace of postures, or antitheses of movement, by turns slow and stately, then wild and passionate. In endless variety of windings the body bends, stretches, trips, elastically, upon hips and ankles. An improvisation of the feet, an arabesque of the limbs, a dialogue of gracefully entwined arms and hands. Now again a witty sally and a defiant retort; now an approach, then a retreat; now they turn their backs, now strain forward and clasp caressingly; then the girl darts away, and the youth pursues her; then she suffers herself to be caught. It is a merry, hurrying dance, which lasts till the dancers give in, laughing and out of breath.

It was in full swing when Askol leaped among the dancers, his eyes flashing, his yellow toga flying wildly as he waved the tinkling tambourine above his black curly head, and beat it with the back of his hand. He was quite a Bacchic figure, and carried the enthusiasm to the utmost point. Meanwhile antique-clad maidens gliding among the crowd presented the living counterparts of those slender dancing-girls painted on the walls of Herculaneum.

It was a brilliant conclusion to a genuinely Roman

feast. The guests now exchanged good-nights, and for many a day people in Rome talked of Askol's entertainment, where modern comfort and refinement had been blended so charmingly with the manners of the ancients.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ON the morning after this feast Aisma was sitting in his studio. His canvas was before him, he had taken up brush and pencil, but his thoughts were too confused and wandering to allow him to settle to his work. So he went to his writing-table and began a letter to his sister—his confidante of old, whose calm good sense had so often stilled the tumult of his mind. When he had hastily covered a few pages and read them over, he was again at variance with himself. First he thought one thing, then another. When he read his thoughts on paper he reflected: "What's the use of expressing all this? Why give written form and substance to what is still struggling and seething within?" So he tore up the paper and sat down to his picture.

His mind, his imagination, his heart, were full; but all was chaos, and as yet there were no Elohim hovering above the waters to separate and set bounds to them.

Yes, now he knew but too well how he ought to make his Helen. Marciana had thoroughly apprehended the scene and reproduced it well. Did this mean any-

thing? Was it merely an artistic homage, or a tenderer one? What a Helen she was! Far superior to the painted one, even though Marciana had once already inspired him to alter that.

Yes, his old men were good. There they sat in a half-circle, their beautifully-folded robes in shade, lighted only by reflections. Behind them nothing but the deep blue sky, against which the fine aged heads stood out in clear shadow, while the light behind them touched here and there with silver their grey and snow-white locks; they were genuinely Homeric; venerable, beautiful, impressive. Serious besides, for the admiration they felt for the glorious woman who arose before them was nothing but the pure thrill excited by the beautiful, combined with the noble purity that is inherent in it. In the expression of those faces there was nothing of that which another modern painter had given to the hoary judges before whom the magnificent Phryne was suddenly unveiled.

Of the two maidens who attended Helen, one was seen only in half-length, while the head and shoulders of the other were alone visible, for they were descending the stairs behind their mistress. Helen was the *tany-peplos*; she wore the long-trailing robe peculiar to women of rank, falling down limp over her hips and limbs. A long, filmy veil descended from her head; even in side-view her face was shown in full light, but her eyes were downcast, for, though well aware of their dangerous power, she felt fearful and timid on account of the distress and disaster she had brought upon princes

and peoples. In her face might be read the thought : " Oh, miserable me ! why did not some fierce blast or savage billow sweep me away before I left my native shores with him ! " Yet she retained her proud spirit intact, for she knew that " not she was the guilty one, but the gods who had decreed it so," and more especially the one irresistible goddess Aphrodite, of whom she was the earthly image.

Oh that he might have painted Marciana just as she was that evening ! Then his work would have been immortal !

His thoughts wandered back to the feast. He saw the picturesque groups, the dancing girls, the variety of figures such as he had often painted in his scenes from antique life.

But above them all arose one figure, filling and entralling his soul—that of the charming, richly-endowed woman who was making herself more and more completely master of his imagination and his mind.

He looked around the walls of his studio. Here were studies of Pompeii, of the wall-paintings of Herculaneum, casts of the Neapolitan Hera and the great Zeus Otricoli. And there again, on yonder wall, that "*Odero se potero, si non, invitus amabo.*" What ! wavering after all—ay—and conquered ! Where was the strength of old, the strength born of experience ? Open again, old wounds, to teach me again and bestow insight. Smart anew, if it must be, if your lessons have not been sufficient.

" But—why this resistance ? To what end—if there

should really be something good in it. *O fax Satana*, hence! If there is something good—ay, that is just the question; and it is weakness that answers ‘yes’ thus prematurely; while reason says ‘no.’ Marciana, what, in point of fact, is she? Women have a worldly wisdom peculiar to themselves, that helps to conceal their feelings. They are like the little turtles—very pretty in shape and color; but take them in your hand to examine them more nearly, and they straightway draw in head and feet. What have I to do with her? What do I know about her? That representation of my picture was certainly a delicate compliment. And yet, that fine red rose which I sent her because I had accidentally overheard her speaking about it with Askol, not a word of thanks.”

He dipped his brush in a couple of colors on his palette, and drew on an empty canvas the outline of a female face, whose body he ended in a sphinx. Thus his thoughts expressed themselves.

“‘*Odero se potero*.’ Why cannot a man if he will? But if the will is unwilling to will? What is will? How do we know whether it is the will or the not-will that speaks? Will-not is also will. Which will must be obeyed, then? Oh, Ada, I am as weak and wavering as you. . . .”

There was a knock at the door. Unconsciously Aisma said: “Come in,” in Dutch.

It was understood, however, for the door opened, and Mr. van Walborch entered, accompanied by Marciana and Ada.

"Do we disturb you?"

They might well ask. Aisma was quite disconcerted, and the agitation of his soul was legible on his face. He recovered himself, however, bade them welcome, and asked Ada sympathetically if she was quite restored to health. The conversation turned on the delightful evening enjoyed at the feast. Soon the discourse became animated as they stood before the Helen.

"Aisma," said Mr. van Walborch, "I am enraptured with your picture; will you let me have it?"

"With pleasure, if it turns out well. Wait till it is finished, and then you can see if it pleases you."

"Hallo!" exclaimed Marciana, gaily. "*Odero se potero, si non, invitus amabo*'—what does that mean?"

"An inscription from Pompeii."

"A fatalistic motto. Is it yours?"

"Oh, a mere fancy; I wrote it down just for the style of the Roman letters. . . ."

She looked at him, and was at no loss to draw a different conclusion. And the little demon that nestles in every young woman's heart laughed and gambolled with malicious satisfaction.

While Mr. van Walborch was talking with the painter about his work, Ada and Marciana walked round the studio. They saw some sketch-books on a table, on various pages of which were sketches of a woman's face, attempts to give form to a memory; whose—Marciana's mirror had already informed her. She turned round a few canvas frames which stood with their faces to the wall; on one was a painted sketch, the same woman's

face, ending in a sphinx. Marciana hastily returned the canvas to the wall, and looked mockingly at Ada, whose face wore a look of melancholy, struggling to transform itself to a smile.

"May Mrs. van Buren help me to finish off Helen to my mind?" Aisma asked of Mr. van Walborch.

"Why not? With all my heart. The picture will be all the more valuable in my eyes."

"She is not to be persuaded, it seems."

"Tut, tut, nothing but a whim; we shall see who is the strongest; even an Amazon yields now and then. Penthesileia was conquered too, though only by Achilles."

The ladies now came back to where the men stood, and Marciana said, as she looked attentively at the picture:

"How rich this is, and thoroughly worked out! One never ceases to make discoveries in your work, the finish is so exquisite."

"What is done quickly is seen quickly," answered the painter.

"How thoroughly you are acquainted with all the details of antique life. . . ."

"Some people call you too archæological," said Mr. van Walborch.

"Too archæological? He who treats an old-world subject in our day must not neglect the merest trifle. But it is not a question of archæology—that is but an accessory, a means. Archæology is my favorite study, and I think I have quite as much right to choose an important aspect of the life of antiquity as another has



to compose a landscape or a view of some town. My purpose is to reproduce that piece of life, and that by means of beauty, both of color and form."

"I have also heard objections made against that very fulness of detail. Thus some artists thought. . . ."

"I think those that are deficient in some thing always think that same thing excessive in another. Have these people never seen a Raphael or a Da Vinci? But it is true, youthful daubers with sentiment and *chic*, who are utterly unable to draw a head with a bit of chalk, find fault with Raphael."

"Pardon, there are such things as subjects and accessories: the latter must surely be subordinate."

"Subordinate, certainly, but not necessarily unworked out."

"I believe you are right," put in Marciana; "when we are writing we must indeed keep some sentences subdued and quiet, but the words must all be conjugated and declined, not merely set down in their radical, *indefinite* form."

"Of course, if you write that a person is going away, you say that he *is* going away, and not only — pshaw! Nay, I fully admit that a great master's method may be broad and summary, because he can be minute if he likes, and because it has come at last to be his distinctive character. But, I ask you, what can one say of the *epigoni*, who scorn academical study, who do not draw and do not finish? A first upwelling of sentiment is easily put on canvas, but to keep that, and yet to finish

off every detail as it ought to be finished, believe me, there lies the great difficulty."

"You are quite right," said Mr. van Walborch. "I am only arguing for some whose art is also precious in my eyes. Look here, I think there are two methods, which have existed from time immemorial, and will continue to exist until the end: the one springs from personal feeling; it is the artistic emotion which we call lyric; it strives to express a feeling rather than an object or an incident, and it does this by means of tone and sentiment, by vague suggestions rather than definite representation. The other finds its inspiration in outside objects, and reproduces them. It is an artistic emotion which is epic and historic, and which expresses itself in clear, definite forms. The one artist half shuts his eyes and looks through his lashes; the other opens them wide and describes every part and form and boundary line."

Aisma shook his head.

"That is a compromise. In the world of reality I see none of those strange and often fanciful effects. Nature is clear and definite. No color is without form, any more than a soul ever reveals itself without matter. If people would only believe that, if draughtsmanship and grand painting were neglected, a taste for the severity and nobility of art would die away too. Then there would be no historical, no monumental art; no noble painting of the nude, no more style and dignity, no ornament and decoration; sculpture would dwindle and architecture become poor and mean. Thus, except

in the case of some mighty personality, whose powers are sufficient to dignify any subject, the importance of art will decline more and more."

"You are going too far. Just think of Ostade, of Jan Steen, of . . ."

"Oh, I honor them with all my heart! but only for their sentiment and their technical skill. They were mighty geniuses, and yet—I require more mental culture and more refinement in our day."

"My dear fellow, for you who have to paint it is quite another thing than for us who are lookers on. We have not to award the prize of beauty, as Paris had. Properly speaking, Paris made a great mistake. He ought to have cut the apple in four, given one part to each of the three goddesses, and eaten the fourth himself, saying—no, he need have said nothing, and would then have said quite enough."

"Paris was certainly an artist," said Marciana. "He made his choice boldly. An artist cannot follow three paths, even although three goddesses stand before him; he must resolutely pursue one way, even though he enrage the others. Nevertheless, Paris chose wrongly: he chose sentimental art, he ought to have chosen that of Athene, which was based on knowledge and wisdom; or else the austerity of Hera."

"I can't quite agree with you there. When all is said, the fact remains that every true art must be born of sentiment and love—that is the highest; without this there is no refinement, no charm in art or in life."

Aisma said this partly from a playful desire to tease

her, partly in earnest, for he knew too well that without feeling there might be artistic ingenuity, but no art, and that the highest knowledge, although it exalts the artistic gift, does not confer it.

"Ada," said Marciana, "I have been speaking with Mr. Aisma about you, and he was kind enough to give the matter his consideration. Perhaps"—she made a sign to him as she spoke—"he will be good enough to explain things more fully to you himself."

"Certainly; you must help me to work some improvement in taste in the matter of needlework and ornamentation."

"What can I have to do with that?" said Ada.

"That is just what I am going to tell you. Women can do a great deal to reform their tasteless needlework. Generally speaking, their notions of ornamentation are all wrong. In this we ought to take a lesson from the Egyptians and the Greeks. . . ."

"And the Japanese," said Marciana, archly.

"Of course, very many from the Japanese and the Chinese too. Just look at these fans! They are made out of almost nothing, and yet what taste and grace! A tiny figure, a couple of birds, with a few pure lines and a few plain colors—that is the whole thing. Yet more would be too much. In all our ornament there is too much relief and picturesqueness. An ornament must be subordinate to the object adorned, and not overtop it. It must lie quietly upon it. It is in this respect that Greek vases, with their simply outlined ornaments, are felt to be so true. With these and other antique figures

you might make charming fans. Take a bit of paper and cut it out in the form of a fan. Look, here are books and a number of copies I have made. Look at those girls playing at knucklebones, those boys setting cocks to fight, those dancing-girls and toilet-scenes. See this Greek woman putting on her bracelet; what elegance in her action as she clasps the bracelet on her wrist! observe the uplifted hand and the open fingers; is it not exactly as you would do it yourself? And that is done almost out of nothing—on a bronze-green ground, a figure in red, and a few strokes to fill it in.”

Suiting the action to the word Aisma cut out a paper fan and lightly drew a couple of those figures.

“Look there; a little border under these, a meander or a twig of ivy, and there you are. Will you try to do that for me?”

Ada was one of those characters that always begin by saying, “I cannot.” But she dared not offer opposition to this friendly insistence.

“I shall send you engravings to trace, and all else that you require. You will soon get the knack of it. And I know a market for them, both here and in Paris. Come, you may just as well make a trial here at once.”

While Aisma cleared a place on the crowded table, Van Walborch and Marciana took leave of the painter.

Marciana thanked him cordially. Van Walborch turned back to call through the door:

“By the way, will you go with us to Tivoli? I thought of going the day after to-morrow; will that suit

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you? Then we will all four go, and we shall call for you early."

The invitation was gladly accepted, and the needful arrangements made.

## CHAPTER XIX.

It was a beautiful day in May — once the month of the Bona Dea, now of the Madonna — when the friends drove out of the Porto San Lorenzo to go to Tivoli.

In the early morning it was still cool, but soon the sun began to pour down warm beams. The Aurelian wall disappeared from sight, but Michael Angelo's dome remained visible in the distance. The Tiburtinian highway leads through the wide-spreading Campagna of Rome. The Campagna possesses, even for Italian scenery, a peculiar character. It is impressive through its austere gravity, its sober coloring, its mighty lines.

The wide stretch of this undulating plain, with strongly-marked mountain shapes encircling it in the distance, is unbroken by large trees. Here and there it is crossed by mouldering antique aqueducts, or dotted with tombs; sometimes the solitude is broken by an isolated dwelling, or *osteria*, where carriers pause to drink a *foglietta* of country wine.

The hilly, rocky ground, partly pozzolana, partly tufa, brings forth only a meagre crop of grass, reeds, or stunted shrubs. Among these a few flocks of goats can

browse. Their herdsmen, with goatskins on their legs to protect them from the prickly shrubs, present the appearance of Satyrs. The goats nibble acanthus leaves, and thus receive a Corinthian nurture from the graceful leaf which wreathed that classic capital. Sometimes a herd of oxen is seen, all pearl-grey in color. The road is bordered with low walls built of large blocks of tufa, overgrown with acanthus, scarlet poppies, and convolvuluses. Butterflies hover above them, while across the sun-scorched walls shoot a myriad of graceful lizards.

At rare intervals a cart is met, bearing a triangular awning of sheepskin, or a herd of the "silver-haired" cattle of Virgil, driven by a horseman with a long stick laid across his saddle-bow, or perchance a post-chaise full of country folk.

"There is Soracte in the distance," said Mr. van Walborch; "*vides ut stet Soracte. . .*"

"Not now, *alta nive Candidum*," said Aisma, filling up the quotation.

"Ah! you have also Horace at your fingers' ends."

"How can one help thinking of him here, now that we are in sight of the mountains where lay his Sabine farm, and of the waters of Albulæ; now that we are going to his Tibur?"

"Do tell me — do the words of such an old poet really sound more beautiful than what you could say in your own tongue?" asked Ada, with cool scepticism.

Marciana laughed, but Mr. van Walborch was inclined to think the question almost unseemly.

"Of course they do," he answered, a little testily.

"An Horatian sentence is like an antique coin exquisitely cut in precious metal."

"Our copper coins," said Marciana, ironically, "are money too; but an emperor's coin is something different!"

"A good deal lies in imagination," Ada persisted.

"Imagination! well, imagination is a good thing too," said the painter; "by its means we idealize and rebuild old life."

"Fairer than in reality. We do not know how much sorrow, squalor, and tedium there was in that highly-praised antiquity."

"Very probably," said Mr. van Walborch; "but we have nothing to do with that. Horace himself idealizes the olden time, and does not spare the lash of his satire to his own."

"And his time is just the time that we are now glorifying."

"Distance, Ada, distance; that gives the proper point of view, and effaces all that is jarring and insignificant. And Horace was no melancholy grumbler against his times; he was a model of sound philosophy; and if there was something bitter to be digested, he would say: 'Temper it with a gentle smile.'"

"He might also have said: Temper the sweet with a bitter laugh," said Marciana.

Van Walborch looked at her and shook his head: "An evil doctrine, my child, the road to pessimism and nihilism."

"The only one that can help to maintain self-



possession and cheerfulness against the world," she said, laughing merrily. "Tell me, what was Horace like?"

"A short, thick-set man, with crisp black hair hanging low on his forehead, which grew thinner as years went by. At least, this is how he draws his own portrait," said the painter.

"Do you think he had a just opinion of women, Aisma?"

The painter shrugged his shoulders sarcastically, and answered:

"What shall I say? his opinion was that they are troublesome to deal with, and difficult to keep under control."

Marciana laughed so heartily that the *vetturino* looked round and laughed too, for an Italian is susceptible to gaiety. When they drove past the sulphur springs he turned round again, laughing pleasantly and cracking his whip, while he pointed to the springs.

"*Bellissimo! il mio paese!*" he said.

"Honest fellow," said Mr. van Walborch, "do you see? an Horatian, too, in cheerfulness and idealism. Even that sulphurous district is beautiful to him, because he views it with the eyes of love."

They made a brief halt at Hadrian's gigantic villa. They made their stay short, because it was not the first time they had visited these vast ruins, overgrown with oaks and cypresses. Marciana said they needed something to restore them just as much as the ruins did. At a little distance is seen the height on which stands

Tivoli. The mountain is covered with olives, their quaintly gnarled trunks branching out into four or five stems, sometimes mere husks of bark like to our old willows. The thin, soft, grey-green foliage yields a delicate but not dense shade. Serpent-wise the mountain path winds between the olive-groves. A cart with an awning of plaited straw, under which the driver lies reclined, creeps lazily along the meandering road. At the summit is the little town. After passing through the gate we turn into one of the winding streets, round a corner, and pull up in front of the Albergo della Sibilla. Traversing the passage we at once stand before the pretty little temple—that familiar, often painted temple—with its adjacent foaming waterfalls. At its base, on the steep slope of the rock, tables and flowers are arranged under an awning, and there our party lunched. Instead of oracular responses the Sibyl of the place supplied them with *pollo* and oranges and amber-hued Orvieto.

Their spirits were raised tenfold during this genuine Italian meal, washed down with the delicious Italian wine, and partaken of at a table which rested on a fragment of a column's fluted shaft. Behind, above their heads, rose the antique round temple—that charming architectural flower, which art has formed out of the same Tiburtinian stone whereof nature formed the rocks on which it stands. Around them was the same nature the Romans had gazed upon. Before them lay the deep hollow, with its densely-wooded sides, down which the thundering Anio plunges into the abyss, while its

silver-white spray rises up, and is touched into rainbows by the sunbeams. Above the mountains bends the deep blue sky.

"Oh, look! how lovely!" said the painter; "that mountain brow to the right, with the flat roofs and the little white cloud hanging above its spur. I have a study by Kruseman, painted here in 1831, which renders it exactly in the same manner that we now find it, after the lapse of half a century. Even that little white cloud on the brow of the mountain, which divides the green landscape from the azure sky, is there still. Nature always knows exactly what is wanted."

"She is a woman," said Marciana; "she knows what suits her. Come, shall we take a walk to the falls?"

"Waterfalls always make me shudder," said Ada; "I shall take a stroll about the Villa d'Este, and wait for you there."

"And I shall stay here with Horace," said Mr. van Walborch.

So Aisma descended the mountain paths with Marciana, rejecting the service of donkey-drivers and chairmen, and walked between the splendid trees and cascades. At length they reached the entrance of the rock-galleries, hewn through Mount Catillo in 1826 to bridle the headlong race of the Anio. These tunnels run parallel, and are divided only by a wall of living rock, along which an easy path has been made, while an iron railing serves as a rest to the hand. Those galleries are three hundred and seventy-two paces long, and through them, with

vehement rush and roar, flow the two branches of the Anio.

"Do you easily get giddy?" asked Aisma.

"No," answered Marciana, and passed on before him.

There is indeed no danger, unless the roar of the rapid water rushing past overpowers the imagination and confuses the senses. They went through one tunnel, returned through the other, and were within fifty paces of the end, when Aisma heard a shriek, and saw that Marciana was clinging fast to the iron bars. Whether confused by the uncertain light and the deafening noise, or seized by a panic such as can sometimes suddenly overmaster one, Marciana had felt giddy, and grasped at the railing for support. Her cry terrified Aisma, but he recovered himself quickly.

"Fix your eyes on the wall," he cried; and, passing his arm firmly round her waist, he led her on gently, supporting and preceding her, until they reached the opening.

She let herself sink on a piece of rock, drew off her glove, and held her hand before her eyes.

When she had sat a little and recovered self-command, she let her hand drop and glanced at him with a smile. She was still pale and agitated, and Aisma still trembled with the terror he had experienced. He could no longer control himself.

"Marciana!" he said.

It was the first time he had called her by her name. He said no more, but everything was expressed in his

tone. She felt this, and, raising her eyes, she held out her ungloved hand. He kissed it. She withdrew it slowly, took the rose from her bosom and gave it him.

"Let us go," she said; "they are certainly waiting for us."

"Lean on my arm; the path here is steep and slippery."

Van Walborch had remained sitting under the awning at the foot of the Sibyl Temple. Here, in this lovely Tibur, inspired by the place, he sat reading his Horace, or rather turning over the familiar leaves with a hand guided by memory. What an indissoluble tie it is which, throughout the ages, binds spirits in close communion in the realms of thought — a communion hundreds of years cannot disunite! In his hand he held the little book, the precious Glasgow edition, whose contents he knew so well; the book with the most melodious strain of Latium's Muse; the book written almost nineteen hundred years ago. That is immortality, indeed; and well might this poet, in a moment of self-knowledge, exclaim, *Non omnis moriar*; for he is not dead, and his monument is those poems, "more durable than bronze, and stabler than the ages."

Here sat Mr. van Walborch, and viewed what his friend Horace once saw and sung — steep Tivoli. *Tibur supinum*, where he visited the villas of his friends Munatius Plancus and Mæcenas:

Give me Anio's headlong torrent,  
And Tiburnus' grove and hills,  
And its orchards sparkling dewy  
With a thousand wimpling rills.

As the sunny southwind often  
Sweeps the louring clouds away,  
Nor with showers unceasing ever  
Loads the long and dreary day ;  
Plancus, so do thou remember  
Still to cheer with balmy wine  
All the care and grief and travail  
Of this toilworn life of thine ;  
Whether in the throng'd camp, gleaming  
With a thousand spears, or laid  
On the turf beneath the umbrage  
Of thy lov'd Tiburtine glade.\*

Here he saw the "thick-crowned trees," "the poplars, wedded with festoons of vine," the rushing Anio, Præceps Anio, flowing yonder near the poet's little villa, and past his farm in the Sabine mountains; that country seat, where it was so sweet to recline on the grassy bank far from the city's din, or in the shade of the spring, where "babbling, the crystal fluid wells up, murmuring as sweetly as sweet-laughing Lagage."

There the poet sucked in poesy as the bee sucks honey from the thyme. There he chiselled on Tibur's mossy banks what his modesty called the songs of a humble poet.

All this rings in his language, delicious as music, every word just and exquisite, linked to its successor and forming with it a rhythm-like song, an ode like to a jewel by Cellini. When once that word-music reaches your ear it takes you captive, and not less refreshing is the poet's spirit of self-control and cheerful fortitude.

"Here sit I," thus thought Van Walborch, "one of

\* Theodore Martin's Version.

those 'rude barbarians' he sings of, 'bred in bleak Germania,' who now, by the spirit of your people, and by your songs, are bred up in your *urbanitas*. Friend Aisma, you may dote on your Greeks; the Romans are more modern and more near to us. It is from them that we have all our culture."

Aisma and Marciana; his thoughts wandered to them. His heart could not refrain from indulging the joy the elder feels in building up the happiness of the younger, and in bringing them together. We wish nothing for ourselves then, but everything for the young ones whom we love.

He hardly dared to dream of the future, yet he could not restrain himself. Marciana was his idol; for Aisma he cherished a cordial affection, because of his talents and character. He was, besides, drawn to the painter by that inscrutable fluid of sympathy which binds human souls together. He longed to see her happy and him too, and he knew where the path lay. But when he thought of their characters, he did not see how either of them could be got to bend; they were both so head-strong. That they were not indifferent to each other he saw clearly, but he saw also that Marciana was as inflexible as a rock, and that Aisma was doing his utmost not to succumb. But a man gives less trouble, a man bends more easily; there comes a moment when his feelings are too strong for him. A woman has more means of resistance — or — can it be that her affections are less vehement? A woman can rule her heart; a man cannot.

"Oh, if they would only go to school to him," he thought, holding up his Horace, "he would soon teach them to 'weed the thistles out of their minds.' Ah! my child, you are always harping on strength—well, strength is good, *vivite fortes*, but not too much austerity, no arrogance; the gods hate and punish *hybris*, presumptuous pride. 'No virtue must be pursued further than needful.' *Virtus est medium vitiorum* ('Virtue lies midway between vices'). Exaggerate, and you fall into vice on each side. Oh, those young people and those moderns, they do not know how to keep within bounds. Here is the man to teach you sublime seriousness, the good and true, the man who points out the steep paths of virtue: can there be anything finer than that?

*Eradenda cupidinis  
Pravi sunt elementa et teneræ nimis  
Mentes asperioribus  
Firmandæ studiis.*

"How charmingly he weaves his words together!—the antithetic always next each other *eradenda cupidinis*. 'Pull up evil passions by the root, then strengthen the tender mind with bracing studies!' 'Rule over your soul, or it will rule like a tyrant over you.' But always a just measure. 'There is measure in all things; preserve in every difficulty and trouble a quiet and even mind.' But also, 'Lower your sails if prosperity should make them swell too big!' We moderns, ever busy with the past and the future, have unlearned the *carpe diem*. 'Make use of the day!' 'The heart that cheerfully enjoys the present does not trouble about the morrow,



but tempers the bitter with a gentle laugh.' 'Judgment and strength are noble qualities, but they are not everything.' 'Let the old Massic wine and the Caecuban flow; live according to nature; be gentle to the faults of others. No unwise wisdom, but let some folly mingle in your counsels. It is sweet and sometimes timely not to be too wise. Part from life as the guest from the table, pleased with the good things that have been given to him.'"

While the young woman and the man, their hearts full of strife and unrest, were fighting against themselves as they walked up the heights; while lower down, in the gardens of the sad decaying Villa d'Este, Ada wandered, brooding over the ruins of her wasted life—in the heart of the noble old man who sat at the foot of the Sibyl's temple, the sunny glow of the Roman poet was reflected with unclouded lustre.

Suddenly he saw Aisma coming up with Marciana leaning on his arm. There flamed up within him the hope that had smouldered secretly. When they came close he saw that Marciana was pale, and showed traces of agitation. She told him with a smile about her foolish terrors, and begged him not to speak of it again. But she could not conceal from his glance that more had happened than she was willing to acknowledge. She proposed that they should go and seek Ada in the Villa d'Este.

There, after having wandered for some time among mouldered walls, shattered statues and vases, baroque

grottos, all still so full of beauty, they found her sitting on a bench amidst the giant trunks of magnificent cypresses and bluish-green leaves of colossal aloes.

After dining under the verandah of the Sibyl they started homewards before the fall of evening. The carriage was closed for fear of the Campagna malaria. The crowding populace were pushing their hands and heads into the windows.

"Oh, what *banditti*!" said Ada, shrinking back. "What disagreeable voices these Italians have!"

Aisma gave them a few *lire* to divide among themselves; and the party drove off.

The Campagna was dark and lonely. At rare intervals they overtook a cart, drawn by black buffaloes, creeping along to be in time for early market in the city.

Ada thought they might be attacked by *banditti*, and that it would be rather amusing if her miserly aunts had to pay some six thousand *lire* for her ransom. Very probably she would then rise in their estimation; or, better still, could she be carried off by Turkish robbers, or be shut up in a cloister by Catholic zealots—that would, perhaps, be of some avail.

Van Walborch wove Horatian verses in his dreams of the future. No one spoke. Marciana sat quietly in her corner. Once, when she happened to lay her hand on the carriage door, she felt it lightly touched by Aisma's. She allowed it to remain for a moment, then gently drew it away.

The slender sickle of the moon passed through the cornfield of the stars, and now and then one of the severed ears was seen to drop.

At length the carriage, creaking and squeaking with its drag, jerked over the steep Roman streets, and soon every one was at home.

Aisma sat up till far in the night, full of all that had taken place. "*Se potero*," thought he; "but I can-*not*. I love her, and that love is stronger than I am."

Neither did Marciana find rest. She looked at herself in the mirror, not from ordinary vanity, but from a certain curiosity about herself, excited by the influence exercised by the woman she beheld there; for she knew that she possessed a fascination greater than is exercised by many a more perfect beauty, and this possession was gratifying to her. A woman need not be looked on as a coquette on that account. No woman who possesses these peculiar gifts will deny in her heart that she possesses this not objectionable desire to please. In the background of the mirror she also saw her past life, and it then dawned on her that she had reached a decisive turning-point to-day. Backwards or forwards? Forwards, and all the possibilities of the past renewed—all the hard-won repose destroyed, her individuality renounced?

"Is it love that I feel? Those tender chords have once been snapped. I believe I am no longer capable of a great love, and for a small one—I am myself too great. Let me not be deluded by a mere passing fancy. Oh, heart! what wilt thou? Well do I know what thou

desirest; thou art already willing; the equipoise is already in peril."

But pride and selfish inflexibility assumed the disguise of strength and self-possession. She recovered herself, and "Back," she said, "back, while there is yet time, or else I shall lose myself!"

Oh, Amazon! wilt thou not stoop thy proud neck?

## CHAPTER XX.

THE following day Aisma found Martiana quite different from what he expected. There are things that one feels without being able to define them clearly, and which, if they were put into words, would sound too absolute. She was very friendly, as she always was, but her countenance betrayed no change, no emotion.

Reserved was not the word to describe her bearing; she was frank and open. But she appeared to him like a horseman who seems to let his horse pace freely, but who yet keeps a firm hand, albeit the rein does not look tight. It conveyed an impression of coldness to him which affected him most disagreeably. If a man has given his whole heart, he feels hurt when he discovers that the surrender is not mutual. And Aisma's temper was irritable.

Yet he neither could nor would show his feelings; he had too much pride for that. Besides, although he had doubtless displayed them unmistakably the day

before, he had not said or asked anything. He found Mr. van Walborch silent, and not in his Horatian humor. He had that morning, in the course of conversation with Marciana, ventured a cautious allusion, but received a laughing reply, which fairly routed him.

When this state of affairs had lasted some days, and occasioned a certain strain, the painter began to feel somewhat hurt. Feeling is a mimosa; its leaflets shrink together quickly, if touched. Over the blue heavens flitted light clouds; old wounds made themselves felt again; bitter thoughts arose out of the crypts he had thought closed up, venting themselves in sarcasm and self-reproach. Why had he been such a fool! How lucky it was that he had not expressed himself more absolutely and incautiously! "*Femina fax Satana*"—woman is a torch of the devil!

One morning, while he was in this mood, he went to see Ada. He had no definite plan, but a dim feeling that he might obtain light there.

"How are you getting on with your drawing?" he asked, by way of giving color to his visit.

"Oh, badly. I cannot do that; I cannot do anything. Just look. . . ."

"Come, come! you must not lose heart at once; you must not let yourself get so agitated, or torture yourself with such despair."

It is easier preaching to another than to one's self.

"I shall help you to get a start. The beginning is quite right; perseverance. . . ."

"Yes, if I only were Marciana! she always perse-

veres ; but that is easy enough when one can do everything."

"Assuredly she has a rich and powerful mind. You have known her long, have you not?"

"Yes, a long time."

"How—if it is not taking too great a liberty—how—was she in former times, when she was married?"

"Oh, that was not a happy time. She had an enthusiastic and poetical spirit; she was different from other people; she was very peculiar; and her husband was not bad, but he was a stranger to everything that interested her. He was practical, and an enemy to everything poetical. In short, it turned out very miserable. All this wounded and embittered her at first, then made her retire into herself."

"Is she not a little. . . ."

Ada looked at him.

"—Capricious?" he added, hesitatingly.

"Oh no; it is just her firmness that I always admire. She never suffers herself to be turned aside from her purpose."

"That may pass into obstinacy; I do not think she would speedily succumb to anything."

"Not by pressure from outside—no; only if it comes from herself and she is fully convinced. Ah! I envy her her strength!"

"Strength of mind is certainly a virtue; but it sometimes passes into hardness. She seems to me a little hard—not yielding enough—not enough feeling."

"Oh, do not call her unfeeling! She has a heart of gold!"

"As brilliant, yes, but — hard?"

"Gold is not hard," said Ada, with a smile; "it is malleable, but a delicate hand is needed to fashion it. No, if she seems hard, it is because she has tried to harden herself against suffering, misconception, and disillusion. When reproaching me for my weakness, she would often say: 'Child, one must be a little sceptical and hard, or else one goes down!' But I cannot be that. I admire her, and I love her dearly. To me she has always shown herself full of heart. I was just going to her — will you come, too?"

"Yes, gladly; or — now that I think of it, it does not suit me to-day. But let me first give you a little further help with your work."

He gave her a start with her drawing, walked with her as far as the Piazza di Spagna, and went his way.

As old Montaigne says, "*L'homme est merveilleusement divers et ondoyant*," or perhaps Ada's gentleness had contributed. However this may be, the customary frank familiarity was soon re-established among the friends. Aisma was constrained to admit that there was nothing of what is usually called coquetry in Marciana's attitude towards him. Coquetry is something different from the desire to please. That is an allowable natural instinct, and in many respects a duty.

Assuredly this highly-endowed and remarkable woman was too womanly not to be aware of the impres-

sion she was wont to make ; and now and then she felt not indisposed to show it. With Aisma, however, she was always natural, and tried no feminine arts on him. Hence it came that their intercourse was marked by great ease and sincerity, which, it would be said, could only exist where there was no thought of love ; and as both believed themselves to have resolved that there should be no question of this between them, their intimacy had become easy and confidential. So she felt no scruples about asking him to take her to the Villa Borghese. She had several times found the gallery closed, while Aisma had an admission there in order to pursue his studies. She therefore requested him to be her escort.

"I will tell you why," she said. "You know Ouida's 'Ariadne'? I like that novel immensely ; one breathes in it the very air of Rome ; one sees and feels the sparkling, glittering spray of the fountains."

"Hawthorne's 'Transformation' would seem to have suggested the idea to her ; you know that, don't you ?"

"Well, I dare hardly say that it *suggested* the idea ; there is a slight similarity in the symbolic analogy between a statue and the character of a person — that is all. But do you think such borrowing objectionable ?"

"Not in the least ; that was not my meaning. The ancients availed themselves of an existing *motive* a hundred times over, and the old painters of succeeding ages have not been afraid to handle a familiar theme."



"Nor the earlier writers either. It is a piece of folly nowadays to say: 'Look, that has been taken from so-and-so; and that has been used before!' Originality and novelty — and there is much to be discounted from that same novelty — we always come upon it again in something old; originality only consists in the application in form and thought. It lies deeper than the outward suggestion. 'Ariadne' has turned out something quite different from 'Transformation.'"

"'Ariadne' was the occasion of my beginning to call her Amazon, and to tease her by so doing," said Mr. van Walborch, "if she would only take a lesson from it. . . ."

Marciana waved her hand, playfully, to stop his speech.

"Oh, come, Amazon! who believes in Amazons now? Why I can't even ride on horseback, or shoot with bow and arrow, and I have no spur on my left heel."

"Tut, tut," said Van Walborch; "you ride your own hobby-horse hard enough. By the way, it was anything but wise of the Amazons to place their trust in material weapons; they possessed others much more formidable."

"And the moderns have others more formidable still, of which the ancients had no conception," said Aisma.

"Indeed! I am curious to hear about these. For instance."

"Why — for instance — the ancients fought openly

and ventured their own persons; the modern Amazons have all sorts of means of attacking men, while they keep out of shot."

Marciana took pleasure in baffling this challenge by not condescending to reply to it.

"Pray call for me to-morrow to see the Villa Borghese. Do you know why I wish to go to that villa? I want you to tell me your opinion as to whether that head is an Ariadne, as Ouida asserts, or a Bacchus."

"In my opinion there is no doubt whatever."

"Silence! no premature decision; I should like you to look at it there first."

## CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER the first Borghese collection was bought by Napoleon I. and removed to the Louvre, Prince Borghese gleaned a second harvest from the sculpture-bearing Italian fields. Marciana and the painter, who knew the collection, cast mere passing glances here and there, proceeding to the gallery to see the head of which they had been speaking. It is a Roman sculpture, in ideal style, smoother and with less life-like warmth than the higher works of art, but yet very fine. The noble head represents that period of early youth in which the difference between masculine and feminine features is not so clearly marked, and it displays the softness of the

Dionysian character. The face, slightly bent forward, is suffused with an expression of subdued pathos. On its curls rests a wreath of vine leaves.

"Poor girl," said Marciana. "Aisma, will you, in the first place, do penance for your notion that the woman draws on the man, and keeps herself out of shot? Poor girl! she gave herself and fell a victim. That is what comes when we yield to our feelings, and do not keep firm possession of ourselves."

"You must not pity her too much; a man deserted her, but a god took her up."

"Pshaw! a god is but a man, and it is doubtful whether Bacchus was much more constant than Theseus."

"Now, I am ready to do penance, since you wish it; but this is not an Ariadne."

"Ah! is that your opinion? I thought it was. I am aware that in antique statues it is sometimes difficult to distinguish a young man from a young woman, and this head is very feminine."

"Apollo and Bacchus more especially have these mixed forms, sometimes to a marked degree."

"Yes, but several gods acquired a feminine counterpart in course of time, and among them was Bacchus, whom the Romans called Liber. In female form he became Libera; this Libera was regarded as his consort, and was afterwards identified with Ariadne. So I was thinking this sculpture might be a Liber become a Libera, and thence the likeness to Bacchus and the confusion with Ariadne."

"Ingenious enough; and yet, just look here!"

Going close up to it, he pointed out, between the hair and vine leaves, a pair of very small horns.

"Do you see? that cannot belong to an Ariadne or a Libera: it is the faun-like attribute of the youthful Bacchus."

"Then I shall have to give it up, I suppose; and yet. . . ."

"And yet—you don't like to confess yourself beaten—eh?" said Aisma, looking her straight in the face with a laugh.

Aisma now attentively considered the head, at that moment beautifully lighted by reflections. He gazed with that artist-gaze which converts the observation of every line and form into creative thought. For a while he was quite absorbed. Meanwhile Marciana observed him stealthily, and many thoughts passed through her brain. Ever and anon, though she would not admit it, she felt drawn towards that deep, rich artist-life which was one with Aisma himself; she compared the various aspects and the nature of her art with his, and she became conscious that his completed and exalted hers. This consciousness opened up many new views into the spacious realm of the beautiful.

But shaking off this impression, she suddenly exclaimed, gaily:

"Come out of doors with me; I don't know why, but I am in no mood to see sculptures to-day. I have a mind for living nature."

There, in the broad green fields where the tall

crown-pines rise, far enough apart to show their full shape and spreading crowns, she ran among the flowery grass, plucked a lapfull of lilac anemones, and raced up the declivity till her hat fell back from her head, and her heavy coils of gold-brown hair were loosened, and fell rippling over her shoulders. Her cheek flushed, her full lips parted slightly as if to inhale the sweet air in ample measure. It was as if youth, long repressed, had come back to her again, like a blossom-bearing spring hovering over trees. She looked beautiful just then. After a while she sat down on one of the marble seats to arrange her flowers and bind up her hair as well as circumstances allowed. Aisma made a sketch of her in his sketch-book as she was sitting there with the anemones in her lap. The design afterwards served for one of his most beautiful water colors.

"Marciana, why do you always so obstinately refuse to let me paint your portrait—or rather to sit to me? for as to making the attempt, you have not been able to prevent me from that."

"Oh, I believe in the prejudice of the savages, who are afraid that, if their portraits are taken, they will lose their individuality."

"We are not wild men of the woods."

"Well!" she said, with a charming tremor agitating her frame, "perhaps I am, just a little bit."

"Certainly you are not tame, and perhaps not so easy to tame either."

"But why should I be tamed?"

"Without taming no adaptability, no social relations, no mutual attachment. . . ."

He seated himself beside her, and laid his arm over the back of the seat behind her.

"Marciana! do you think that, considered rightly, life has more of beauty when we do not isolate ourselves, when one being is rounded by that of another, and thus grows richer in itself? We have been speaking about colors in painting; is not a picture richer and more beautiful with various harmonies of color than with a single one?"

"If they only could harmonize. You yourself have taught me that it is much easier to succeed with one figure than two, and that it is difficult to group two figures satisfactorily."

"Difficult, yes; but by no means impossible; if two figures work together to the one end, if they enhance each other's value, if a second figure is necessary, indispensable to the composition! What a beautiful life it must be when two artist-souls love each other!"

"Do you believe in such a thing—not as the illusion of a moment, but as something serious and lasting?"

"There you touch a sore point. I used to say 'no' until a short time ago; but I have begun to doubt, or to hope, whichever you will. . . ."

"Oh, ho! a Bacchus after all. So then I lose my fellow-feeling for poor Ariadne. . . ."

"And of course a man is not worth that fellow-feeling," said Aisma, sharply.

"Come! why so bitter? You are not cheerful at heart; you even laugh in minor tones."

She took up his sketch-book and turned over the leaves.

"Who is that woman, drawn two years ago? or is it an impertinent question? A pretty face, but the expression is not to my liking."

"Oh, do not ask me about her" — and Aisma turned over the leaf — "a painful memory, quite past now."

Marciana saw that he was moved.

"Forgive me for awakening that memory," she said, earnestly, and with sincerity beaming in her clear eyes; "but we are too good friends for you to take it amiss, are we not?"

There was once more that straightforwardness and irresistible charm in her voice against which he was powerless.

"Oh, do not tear out that leaf; you cannot tear it out of your memory. Better to face trouble bravely, and not to conceal what has happened."

Her hand touched his to arrest the action; an electric current passed over him.

"Grief suffered," she said, following the course of her own thoughts, "does not pass utterly, unless it find a voice. The ancients knew this, and called it Catharsis, purification."

"Yes, Marciana, we are good friends; and why should I conceal it from you? In that girl I once thought to find my happiness. I gave her all my heart

possessed, and that heart was then full of artless affection. I gave myself wholly, for half-reserve is not in my nature; but I have had to learn that this was folly. . . .”

“Did she treat you badly?”

“I do not know; perhaps she was different from what I thought her, and my mistake lay there. We were as good as engaged, and then she gave her hand to another; you know, it is the old story. However that may be, I felt it deeply, and thought that she had treated me ill; this has embittered me and prejudiced me against my kind. If one has not the good fortune to be light-minded, an experience like that makes one melancholy, and to look at everything with a jaundiced eye.”

“Unless one give the rein to god-like irony; that heals the wound and makes us insensible to such hurts for the future. That is what I have done.”

“You! Is that, then, the basis of your cheerful mastery over feeling, which I have sometimes taken for coldness?”

“I am not cold; I used to be just too much the reverse; but I have had a hard school to teach me not to be soft. Aisma, your frankness demands corresponding frankness on my part. Let me tell you that I have not been happy either. I suffered terribly in my married life. Far be it from me to speak ungenerously of a man who was honest and upright, but we were ill-suited to each other. Whether the fault was mine? it may be; but what I desired was neither unreasonable nor sinful. It sprang from my nature, from the cravings of my



spirit. I was left an orphan at an early age, and was billeted now on one, now another of my relatives. I was a nuisance. Then with an inexperienced heart I dreamed a dream, the dream of a girl of seventeen years. The young man was handsome, tender to his young friend; he professed to prefer me to all others, until I learned one day that he had long loved another. In after years I came to look on it as very fortunate, for there was nothing in him, but then — then my ideal was shattered. A few years later I made the acquaintance of a man of high rank and character; well-meaning friends whispered that he was going to ask me in marriage. This troubled me, for my heart was not yet healed. But that a highly-respected man of lofty social position seemed to be seriously in love with me—this induced me to accept his hand. That would be rest, I thought. I was still very young, and he much older, but I thought his sedateness might be of service to me. I had been early accustomed to act for myself, and through this to think a great deal, to live much inwardly without opening my heart to any. The necessity of caring for my own soul made me self-reliant. I fancied I had learned that my poetry and ideals were something belonging to books, not to real life. So I spurned my ideals. I was now to have a home of my own, and I thought that my heart, always too wild, would now be secured for ever in well-ordered repose. My husband was clever but commonplace, practical and precise, scrupulous in the performance of duty as well as prompt to bear his part in the trifling amusements of the world.

He had neither comprehension nor desire to go beyond these.

"Gradually, gradually, a still small voice arose in my heart. 'Is this all, then? Is this the be-all and end-all? Hush, ungrateful heart!'

"But the voice would not be hushed; wants, wishes, aspirations formed themselves. Oh! to have a *living* life! what I called life. My likings were very different from his commonplace ones. I loved everything spontaneous, characteristic, free; I delighted in books, in poetry, in art. My heart began to yearn vaguely for warmer, more highly-strung affection and response.

"Had I only had a child, I could have devoted to that little one all my high and tender feelings!

"I felt that some talent was germinating within me and struggling for expression. That I should employ it for my own amusement was just tolerated, but not without a certain compassion; that I should appear in public as an author was, according to him, unbecoming in a woman of my rank. That was very well for opera-singers, actresses, and emancipated blue-stockings. I was too much accustomed to act for myself to fall in readily with those views. I took my own way, and it occasioned a disagreeable strain. I had a craving for encouragement and recognition. It was no foolish vanity, but I felt hurt when my talent was regarded as a mistake — ay as an offence against the social position we occupied.

"Our natures were not able to amalgamate. Neither my heart nor my head found what they needed. So

came estrangement, two paths and a gulf between them, ever wider and deeper. I developed vigorously and rapidly, he remained stationary. There are people who do not grow, and who in their fiftieth year are exactly what they were in their twentieth. He did not understand me. Gradually there had grown up beside him another woman, whom he did not know. When he became a cabinet minister, he thought I should be satisfied, that I should now have a broader, fuller life. He insisted that I should live more in that world, that his wife should shine there, shine outwardly, with youth, beauty, and, above all, with fine clothes. But what an empty world is that, where insignificance inflates itself, where ugliness rouges! There was neither sound learning nor refined wit, and no notion of art.

"He was despotic. He said that I neglected my duties, and tried to force me to go his way. Had he the right to do so? He thought he had. I thought that my individuality was my own inviolable possession, and that I had a right to maintain it. And I was a wild briar-rose, young, strong, full of fire, possessed by the mighty poetry of all that is beautiful and grand in life. One day we happened to read of a celebrated authoress, who had freed herself from a similar position by means of a passionate though irregular love. When I defended the supreme rights of heart and mind, he said to me, in a tone of exasperation: 'I suppose such a thing is what you would like to do?' He then spoke slightly and coarsely of love, and meanly of the relations between husband and wife. Oh, I had dreamed of love as such

a different thing, so grand, so heavenly high, so all-embracing. But I never experienced that. I continued beating my wings against the bars of a gilded cage.

"The result was a divided life. Then came for me a dull acquiescence that led me to discharge every duty with iron resignation, but at the same time with icy coldness. Death put an end to this bondage, and left a remembrance of two lives that had embittered each other, not from wickedness, but from fatality.

"I do not exaggerate what I suffered during those years. It sometimes brought me to the verge of frenzy. But I am strong, and I survived it. I tell you all this, but not to disparage a dead man's memory. Perhaps I was to blame — no, it would be weakness to say so, and false generosity — it lay in our characters. And so," she said, with a mournful smile, "I became the wounded Amazon, but I recovered again, and I swore to continue to be myself, and make no more such experiments. I am happy now with my beloved uncle. But only by means of strength of mind, and by stifling every tender weakness, have I re-conquered myself. Who gives himself to another loses himself."

Aisma gazed in admiration at this young, blooming woman, with her fervent enthusiasm and her unbending strength of will. With a heightened glow on her countenance, her features full of character, but softened by womanly refinement, she was lovelier than he had ever seen her; she fairly enthralled him.

"Marciana," he said, grasping her wrist, "you have thrilled the kindred chords in my nature; Marciana, I

understand you and admire you; your thoughts are mine, your embitterment is mine, your dreams and your aspirations are mine; that dream of a higher life, of great, omnipotent love, of poetry, is mine; I too am seeking that existence which is higher than every-day life; our souls are nearly allied. Marciana, glorious being, full of poetry and beauty. . . ."

"Do not set me up so high," she said, with much agitation. "I should not come up to your expectations; I should destroy your ideal. Perhaps I am not what you suppose. In my youth people always called me a strange phenomenon. Even my writing is said not to be feminine; my whole being is too masculine—not sweet enough, in the weak sense. And yet withal I am only a woman. I have often tried to analyze my character. . . ."

"And what did you think of yourself, then? Tell me."

Marciana laughed, then suddenly putting aside all bashfulness, she said:

"Why, I believe I might be femininely gentle and tender too, if I had not learned that it is a weakness and a defect. Yet I believe that my strength is not coarseness; I have an aversion to whatever is not refined. I am a creature with a craving for society, for movement, for books, for music, for a full, rich, artistic life. Nay, I sometimes think I had a craving for affection and sympathy, for *one-willness*, if I may be allowed to coin a word, with a heart as young and as wild as mine, but—such a one does not exist. No," she said, shak-

ing her head, "no, no, no! it does not exist; it is illusion. I cannot but see that I can sometimes please and fascinate, if I will; and I *will* now and then; perhaps it is those transitions from grave to gay, that mobility of body and mind, my dislike to unnaturalness, which constitute the greatest attraction I possess. See, what I would not confess to any other living soul, there is pleasure to be got from life, and I have a craving to enjoy it."

"And no craving for love?"

"I have grown accustomed to do without it."

"And if I asked you to accustom yourself to it again?"

Marciana rose.

"My friend," she said, "I believe I can find a companion soul in you; but let us remain companions. Oh, let us not delude ourselves with beautiful but treacherous illusions! Illusions cannot be realized without dimming their beauty. They are exotic plants from a dream Paradise, which degenerate as soon as they are planted in earthly flower-pots. The gold dust is brushed off from our wings as soon as we clothe them in earthly robes. So long as man and woman wish for each other their beauty remains intact; when they are united they find that they are different from what they expected."

"In place of ideal transfiguration or, if you will, exaggeration, steps in reality, or, more correctly, truth; and truth, Marciana, is sometimes still more beautiful, though apparently less high, but, on the other hand, less vague and hazy."

"Is not your idea always more beautiful than your

picture? That is what people say, and I myself have often found that my work, when put on paper, did not convey all I had felt."

"That is what we often think, but we never see the idea, or we see it only in vague outline. And what use is it, what does it signify if I can conceive fine pictures or, what must often be the case, fancy that I conceive them, and they have no existence? I do not know whether it is so in your art, but it is so in the plastic."

"Perhaps poetry is still more ethereal and still more immaterial than that in which beautiful matter and material also play an important part."

"Is it not far better to have produced a fine picture, a fine poem, to have given it real existence in palpable forms, than to fancy one could produce something infinitely finer? Nay, we must of course, idealize life — I mean we must beautify it with the lustre of poetry; but a real life is more beautiful than an imaginary one. And a single life is only half; in the double life alone does each individual unfold itself to full perfection. Tell me, suppose you were alone on an uninhabited island — would you compose a poem? would you write it down?"

"Most likely I should have no ink."

"You must not throw the cold water of irony on everything; what is, cannot be jested out of existence."

"No, I should not write it down; in such a case it would not be worth while."

"Ah! and now you would do so, would you not? And why? Because you condense it out of the vapors and communicate it to somebody else, and, if that

somebody feels it with you, you have pleasure and satisfaction. Souls must live a mutual life, with and in each other."

"But they do not require to be married in order to do that."

"That is just what they do require; only then is the union profound enough, only then is all pretence discarded, and all that reserve, that keeping at a distance, which, despite everything, must otherwise continue to separate them. Confidence and self-surrender cannot be half, can suffer no partition wall. Friendship between men and women — good; but if it is a close spiritual kinship, do not juggle with words, call it by its right name."

"Oh, that name! I am afraid of that name. The one who pronounces it is lost already. Passion alters, friendship is steadfast, because each remains his own master, and does not let himself be swallowed up in the other."

"There is a good deal of fancy in that too. Passion alters — well then, let it alter; it still remains a close-knit double life. And neither does friendship continue in its first fervor; it suffers change when it has reached full growth. The one process is somewhat more rapid than the other. In both cases the intensity only gives place to something less violent, but more durable and profound. Both alike demand that each shall freely sacrifice something of his own self, his egotism."

"Yet I am afraid. Remain my friend, and let our souls ennoble each other."



This was just what Aisma had thought and intended a very short time previously. But he had been gradually carried further than he meant. He could not but admit that he too, till a brief time ago, had considered this to be the wiser course. But the wiser, supposing that it really were so, yields to the instincts of the heart. So he no longer thought her views reasonable, and her obstinacy irritated him. In this perplexity, and after her decisive words, the conversation lagged, and the situation became constrained. They walked home silently. Was she perfectly sincere in what she had said? He did not know what to think of her. She felt their conversation could not end in this way. Was it inconsistency, or one of her rapid transitions? Or was it simply a result of her notion of friendly spiritual communion? She asked him all sorts of art questions: about the psychological difference between the art of Raphael and that of Michael Angelo; spoke of her desire to know more of the real nature of the painter's profession, and to make a more thorough study of it.

At her own door she held out her hand to Aisma, and pressed his kindly.

"You must teach me all about it, will you?" she said. "Will you come soon?"

His feelings had been somewhat hurt, but how can a man refuse when an attractive and interesting woman asks him a favor in her sweetest tones?

He said nothing, but, looking into Marciana's eyes with those keen-sighted artist's eyes of his, he merely nodded assent.

## CHAPTER XXII.

MANY an evening was spent by Aisma in those apartments in the Piazza di Spagna, which the taste of the occupants had made so comfortable and gratifying to an artist's eye. There were beautiful drawings on the walls, not such as are bought at fancy prices by so-called lovers of art in obedience to fashion, and to a dealer's powers of persuasion, but such as judgment alone knows how to secure. There was a sketch in red chalk by Raphael, a pen and ink drawing, broadly traced by the firm hand of Mantegna, a spirited Pasini and Fortuny, an Egyptian study by Aisma, and a large photograph of that cartoon of Raphael's for the School of Athens which is preserved in the Ambrosiana of Milan. There stood some of the Tanagra terra-cotta statuettes, a few bronze imitations of antiques, the Faun and the Narcissus from Pompeii, a couple of fan-palms. Marciana kept the rooms constantly supplied with fresh flowers.

Sometimes Ada would come, and have her melancholy brightened up for a while by social and refined gaiety. Sometimes Askol would drop in, his keen, lively spirit quickening cheerfulness and provoking to opposition; or Salviati, whose inborn contentment and comic humor refreshed the heart. Then there was chatting and jesting; new books and prints were always scattered over the table, and afforded matter for conversa-

tion. Sometimes Marciana would produce one of her poems, and then they talked of poetry, of the spirit of the times, of the romanticism that, in new forms, was lifting its head again, of the pessimism that was menacing the ideal, of the ultra-realism that was threatening to oust the beautiful. These two were, together with romanticism, the loathsome Phorkyades to the eyes of Van Walborch, and often provoked his wrath.

"Coarse realism in art," he would say, "and pessimism in life, are two forms of the same disease. You understand that I do not allude to the healthy study of the real, but to what, under the name of realism, passes itself off for truth. Both of these look only at the foul, the ignoble, the unfortunate, and deduce thence their sum total: a thing strikes them as interesting, and they call it the truth. As if there were no other truths but that! As if life and art required no many-sided study, no criticism, no discrimination and selection; as if it were a flat plane that had but one side, and not a sphere with a thousand aspects! The earth is not only the North Pole, the eternal night, with squalor here, with dens of murderers there, not only this death-dealing crater, that wasted life; the earth is a whole that embraces alternations of light and shade, eternal growth and renewal. There is a miasma in the air now, and it is an art, and at the same time a solemn duty, to protect purity and health against it."

Askol did not assent unconditionally to this view. He argued that realism and pessimism also had their rights, were signs of the times, and must be taken into

consideration as such. Life and actuality, agitation and strife, were in his eyes mighty forces, which he defended in every shape. To Salviati these things were totally unknown. The Italian knew neither the Walpurgis Night of romanticism nor the depths of Faust's inquiring spirit. For northern ugliness and northern speculations there was no place beneath his southern sky. He was guileless as a child, gentle by nature, and merry as a Roman Triton, who laughs amidst the trickling water-drops that rattle down on his face. What this water had seen in the depths underground, through what strata of organisms it had oozed up, amidst what antique ruins and relics it had flowed — all this gave him no concern. All he saw was that it sparkled in the sun, and was clear and pure as crystal.

Aisma was too much at variance with himself to speak his mind freely on such subjects. What a short time it was since his bitterness of soul had made him take a dark view of everything in life! He had become a convert, but one in whom the old leaven had, as yet at least, left traces of its presence. His views were only settled in matters of art, and his simple creed was beauty. Without that, art appeared void to him, without exquisite nobleness she was nothing, without purity a wanton.

One evening when the three were alone, and it consequently became possible to carry on a more regular and serious conversation than when the company was mixed, Marciana led up to a subject that had occupied her for some time.

"How much there is I should like to discuss thoroughly with him!" she thought. "But we are always being separated or diverted from the subject by other people. There is so much that I could do, know, see, feel, and learn with him."

There were many points on which his mind offered completion and development to hers. She discovered that in herself there was a great deal of incompleteness. His practice and his views of art had opened her eyes, had awakened new feelings of which she was scarcely conscious. Nor would she admit to herself that they had already become desires. Her notions of art had hitherto inclined her to prefer the quiet grandeur, the severity of form, and stern impressiveness of sculpture. Of the attractive sides of painting and drawing, both born of feeling, she had hitherto known but little. A glimmering of apprehension had indeed come over her now and then, but as yet she did not know what to make of them. Now that her mind was opened to their beauties by Aisma, thirst for fuller knowledge made her eagerly seek an opportunity of making up what she began to feel might be a defect. Her poetical nature made her readily susceptible to painting. It was in poetry that she poured out her feeling. She lavished on the flowers of her fancy her womanly tenderness and all sentiments which she would not suffer to dominate her mind in real life. Now she saw that feeling was the vitalizing principle of painting, as it is of music.

Both had been seeking to banish this feeling from their daily lives, and had confined it exclusively to their

art. Both now became dimly aware that art and life are not to be separated at pleasure.

To him also a new view of art was disclosed. The power of poetry had indeed made itself felt in him as an inspiring principle; he was acquainted, but not familiarly, with the old poets. He instinctively regarded their works as materials for his own, and he read them for their contents only. Poetry, as an independent art, as an art of itself, its *technique* and individual laws, its deep foundations, were not known to him as such. Now he learnt from her that they actually existed. Both were thus striving after something of the old Italian versatility, after the broadening and deepening of their minds and art.

"It is really unfortunate," she said, "that we can express so imperfectly and feebly wherein consists the beauty of a work of art. Even that which we feel is often vague; and, though it should happen to be clear, we cannot explain it in words; all our epithets are so worn and attenuated. Perhaps it is best after all to use the simplest; probably they serve our purpose better than superlatives and metaphors."

"No wonder," said the painter, laughing. "We paint for the very reason that what we wish to express cannot be rendered in words. A painter called Ruge once said to some one who asked him for an explanation: 'If I could have said it in words I need not have painted it!'"

"And then there is another difficulty which I have experienced in poetry, and which you certainly have felt

in your art too. One sees beauty in something, another does not see it. How are we to make him feel it? how make him admit it if he disputes?"

"Nothing can be done. We cannot make the beauty of a thing patent to those who do not feel it. One cannot convince them, cannot demonstrate it like a problem in mathematics."

"That is why people always dispute so passionately about art and religion," said Van Walborch.

"As about everything that is based principally on feeling. In order to admire a work of art one must surrender one's self to its influence—no buts, no obstinacy, no self-conceit; it must be free, frank surrender, or the beautiful refuses to be grasped."

Marciana hardly knew whether to take this as a hit at herself, but said:

"And thus surrender our own judgment?"

"That is not the correct expression, but we must be ready to sympathize. We must not begin with saying to a work of art: 'I would have had you different; your creator ought to have done this, and to have left that undone.' Do not be ashamed to be the inferior; a thousand to one the maker of that work was a much better judge than you."

"The great Italian masterpieces stand so high that we cannot grasp them fully at first," said Marciana. "I admire them; they inspire me sometimes with sacred awe; but I am not always familiar with them."

"It is with the great masters," said Van Walborch, "as with the appearance of Zeus to Semele. At first

they are overwhelming and crushing. Afterwards, as we get better acquainted with them, we grow accustomed to their divine glory; and, without any loss of reverence, we are less disturbed and awed, and begin to be at home with them."

"No wonder," said Aisma, "that we do not comprehend them immediately. Do we thoroughly understand Shakespeare or Beethoven at first sight? And yet people expect to understand Raphael or Michael Angelo at a glance! We Northerns have got a great deal to unlearn first. You have learned to draw?"

"Yes," said Marciana; "but I learned badly. I can express myself better with the pen. I learned to make drawings without having learned the rudiments; and you know without roots there can be no fruit."

"Everybody ought to learn to draw as well as to write," said Van Walborch. "Everybody learns to read and write that he may learn to express himself and understand what is written, but not necessarily that he may become an author himself. In the same way people ought to learn drawing, not to become artists, but to understand art-language and its grammar."

"Exactly; and all the more, because in our art matter and its treatment is of so much importance. In literary works, matter drops entirely out of sight; in plastic art, matter constitutes no small part of the whole essence."

"That is just what I wanted to learn. Do tell me—is it true, as some artists allege, that in a picture the subject is a matter of indifference?"



"Yes, and no. People do not discriminate. In my opinion the subject does not constitute the artistic value; but yet the subject is not quite indifferent. It is true that a single motive without any further significance or subject may be beautiful by dint of skilful execution, but the art is greater when the motive itself is intrinsically beautiful and important. There are art-works in which the subject is almost everything, but which break down in the art; that, of course, will not do either. The subject must not have separate existence; it must be at one with the art. At all events, it is the execution alone that makes the subject a work of art, and gives the work its real value.

"And here you must also discriminate. In the work of art there is the subject — the thing represented — which is not indifferent, but which, nevertheless, is not the chief point; then there is the motive in a stricter sense — that is the thought. The real thought in an artistic sense is not what is outwardly represented; neither is it a philosophical idea, or an ulterior meaning; it is the art-thought, and this is the essence. This is the combination of forms, lines, color, and tone, which has formed itself in the brain, and into which every motive is transfused and grouped.

"Take Raphael, for instance, in his School of Athens. Look at that splendid photograph; there you have, in the first place, a subject, the representation, ideas. Here are the various philosophers of Hellas in groups: how they harmonize, yet how they differ from each other! That might also be the subject of a written

representation, or a mediocre painter might have had those ideas too. But now comes the artistic thought ; that is, the way in which, in this instance by a man of genius, they are conceived, meditated, imagined, arranged, drawn, colored. That is the chief consideration in Raphael's eyes, that is his thought, therein lies his soul. There is quite as much soul, quite as much brain-power expended on that as the thinker expends on his system of philosophy, or the historian on his narrative. In the third place, there is something else to be conceived in plastic art. A literary work owes none of its value to material execution, whether the handwriting or the type be good or no."

"By your leave," said Marciana, "I must say I cannot unconditionally assent to that. If we have a witty or beautiful thought we sometimes feel constrained to write it down well."

"And I always enjoy a favorite author better in handsome print," said Van Walborch.

"Granted ; but yet you will not pretend that you admire an author for his caligraphy or for the print. But in our art the question, how a thing is done, is of the very highest importance. This is true to such a degree that some works are charming on this account alone, without anything else to recommend them. With us, part of the beauty consists in the way crayon or pencil is used ; whether heavy or spirited, awkward or dexterous, cold and coarse or noble and firm, with feeling hand, with full mastery over form and material. In drawing especially I can make it clear to you. You

must not look at the whole, but learn to spell; follow with your eye every form and feature. Look, I can show it you with Braun's excellent photographs. Just look at Raphael's drawings—what nobility! And why? Because he ascends from the actual model to the most beautiful forms. Look—in that arm the purity and grace of line, that firmness of touch, result because the knowledge is so accurate, and the tenderness, because the hand instantaneously obeys every throb of his high artistic feeling."

Accompanying his thoughts with his hand, after the manner of artists, Aisma took paper and pencil, and demonstrated what feeling there lurks in softness or emphasis, in the most delicate curve of a line.

"Look, a line like this is dry and hard; but see, now, how a line like this can reproduce every emotion of the soul. That is what Raphael does to a very remarkable degree in his drawings. That is what people overlook if they do not know *technique*, or have not their attention drawn to it. Da Vinci has it in quite another way. He had perhaps the most sensitive hand in drawing that ever existed—that hand, which was able to bend a horse-shoe, is as tender, as flexible, as a feather, but it is also as firm as a rock. See his heads in the Uffizi, in the Louvre. How they are modelled, with their mysterious shadows and their equally mysterious smile!"

"That smile," said Van Walborch, "which Aphrodite, the laughter-loving Philomeides, taught Da Vinci's women."

"It is to this material executive skill that you must attend, that you must learn to comprehend and feel. It is the same in painting. With fresco-painters you must look more at grandeur of manner; at firmness, at the nobleness with which they elevate nature, at the harmony of lines, the choice of colors, the arrangement—in short, their infinite knowledge and power. This all resolves itself into three great types: Da Vinci, with his mystic fascination, which sometimes exceeds the limits of the strictly beautiful; Raphael, with his divine sweetness, always lofty, always noble, clear, and bright, with his ambrosial serenity and cheerfulness; Michael Angelo, with his preternatural giants and his *terribilità*."

"To-morrow," said Marciana, excitedly—"to-morrow we will go to the Vatican to see Raphael and Michael Angelo."

"With pleasure; but take care; rightly considered, you should not see them together, and not compare them."

"Why so?"

"Because you would get confused; but I can warn you beforehand. If you have seen Michael Angelo first, Raphael will disappoint you. Michael Angelo is so awe-inspiring, so potent, that Raphael seems puny at first, and yet. . . ."

"And yet? Do you hold Raphael to be really higher?"

"That is a question not to be answered in a single word. Look here: Michael Angelo overmasters us so that we are tempted, as we are by everything *excessive*,

to think him greatest. Yet the self-restrained, self-controlled strength of Sanzio, who never passes the limits of the nobly beautiful, is perhaps a more absolute, lofty, enduring standpoint than the Titanic rage of Buonarroti. Michael Angelo's ceiling in the Sistine Chapel is an astonishing work. The whole creation has been recreated by Michael Angelo in his turn. The man who conceived and executed this could almost have made the world also. Most decidedly he displays a superb genius as sculptor and architect, yet it is my rooted opinion that he is greatest as a painter. He is a perfect master of all forms; he makes men and women that can move in a different mode from ordinary people. His painting is flat and thin, yet everything is modelled to perfection. Everything is harmonious in his coloring. In that also he is marvellous, or, to speak more correctly, he is a marvellous master of tone. His treatment has something of what is called *sfumato*; the light is tempered; only here and there are soft reflections on the carnations. There are moments when I think the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel is the highest achievement ever reached by a painter. The creation figures stand undeniably higher than Raphael's *Loggie*. The Sistine figures are cosmic, not Christian; they are of no particular age or country, independent of time and place. Michael Angelo's God is not Jehovah, but Uranus, and his deeds are natural processes humanized. His Jesus resembles Hermes. His Creator-God, his Adam, the Fall and expulsion from Paradise — no; with such cosmic beings the sweetly-beautiful Raphael cannot com-

pete. But that is not of universal application; there are moments when Raphael's grave and pure reposeful beauty charms me more. Michael Angelo does not invariably give us the beautiful. The beautiful is something quite different from the grand and sublime. Michael Angelo is Prometheus; Raphael has the moderation of Hellenic plastic art. You must look at Raphael in the *Disputa*—perhaps, as a composition, his greatest work; in the Heliodorus, perhaps the greatest as pictorial art. All are clear, bold, restrained; the work of a man who knows exactly what he wants to do, and does it at once.

“The unequalled and eternal greatness of the best Hellenic sculpture consists in this: that it occupies a pinnacle, and remains on the topmost height”—Aïsma drew a sharp angle—“on the narrow edge of a knife, on both sides of which there is a steep declivity. Before Phidias there was vigor and much beauty, after him there was elegance, but he alone stands on the edge. It is the same with the Italians: Perugino, Massacio, Ghirlandajo, Mantegna, Da Vinci even, and Michael Angelo, all on the one side or the other, while Raphael comes at the moment that sums up everything, and he is on the edge. After him everything declines again to right or left. That is the nature of perfection. Thence comes that repose, refinement, moderation, which an ordinary observer might call inferiority, but which is in reality the highest strength springing from circumstances, age, personal character, and race, and all these working together in just proportion. It is the harmony, the

balance of all qualities, not one of which is suffered to develop one-sidedly through exaggeration or over-cultivation. To be able to keep measure in everything is a mighty power. You cannot compare these two; they are both archangels—*Raphael Beatus* and *Michael Terribilis*. Or, to use another figure—for, even though metaphors be worn threadbare we need them to express ourselves, Raphael's figures belong to the Olympus of Zeus; those of Michael Angelo are a Titanic brood of the age of Uranus. This springs from the lives of the two artists: Raphael enjoyed life, was cheerful and happy; Michael Angelo was gloomy, solitary, and at war with his surroundings. Raphael had a wife, and knew love; Michael Angelo had none, and only at a late period of life learned to know speculative love in ecstatic forms. The art of both is the image reflected from their souls."

Marciana kept her eyes fixed on Aisma, and again admiration stirred within her. He had spoken with eloquence, with that contagious warmth which was characteristic of him when he was quite absorbed in his art. She felt her soul opening like the chalice of a flower, and she drank in the beautiful as the blossom drinks the dew warmed by the sun. Yes, she had always lived with the beautiful, but never before so thoroughly in it. Her poets—Beethoven and Mozart—had educated her up to a high and severe art; Van Walborch had thrown open to her the halls of the ancient world; but never had she been so close to the well-spring of the beautiful, never before penetrated into its workshop.

A few days later she showed Aisma a poem that she had composed.

"It is a subject I have been engaged on for some time," she said; "but I have not been able to complete it till now, and I have finished and copied it for you. May I offer it you? If I have expressed myself well, it is your ideas that have enabled me to do so."

A ray of joy illumined the painter's face. He thanked her fervently.

"Read it to us yourself," he begged, "then I can feel the proper tone."

Marciana read it very simply, but with the lively vibration that the artist alone can give to his work.

#### CARRARA.

Bewitching shores of fair Italia,  
Where the West makes the ancient Tyrian sea,  
With heaven-reflecting, soft, cerulean waves,  
To scoop the curving coast in scalloped fringes,  
Enwreathing them with silver spray festoons.  
Bay threads itself on bay: 'tis Genoa,  
Whose marble round the bosom of the sea  
Its arms enclasps. Rapallo, Sestri, Deiva,  
La Spezia, Avenza — names all full of music,  
Charming the ears of children of the North.  
Oh, heaven-blest land of sun and lazuli,  
Whose breath is orange-blossom, and whose thistle  
The crimson-chaliced cactus, and the aloe,  
Plant-mastodon of worlds pre-Adamite,  
With blue-green foliage, stout and sinewy;  
Whose soil with oleander and with laurel,  
Olive and grape and myrtle, teems profuse;  
With woods of citron, sky of malachite.  
Enstarred with golden fruit — Europa's Eden!



The people? What is left for it to do?  
The world has felt its stamp, received its culture.  
Old Rome bestowed heroic force — the law,  
The State, bore Hellas' art, hewed out and modelled,  
And chiselled the fine gold of its own tongue  
In song and stately speech; it gave to Europe  
Its worship, and — revived — the cult of beauty.  
What would ye more now? It enjoys existence;  
If need be it produces a Canova,  
Or forms Cavour, and from Caprera's rock  
A Scipio starts, whose name is Garibaldi.

Avenza past, a little landward in,  
Before us lies Carrara's marble mine!  
Carrara! No audacious Niobe,  
Priding herself upon her blooming offspring;  
But shy nymph from the mountains Apennine,  
Whose marble womb, girdled by heavenly Zeus,  
A race of glorious being bore, and gods—  
Whose snowy bosom of his kisses bears  
The seal, and in whose sunbeam-gilded breast  
A delicate vein still flows of ether-blue.

Oh, lovely are your forms inviolate,  
Carrara's grey rocks, peaked and angular,  
In sloping, swelling, bending, undulating  
Curves. Snow on your summits—at your feet  
Olives — there lies betwixt the heaven blue  
And the blue sea your snowy well of beauty,  
A jewel set in lapis lazuli.

Here is it that the robe was woven by Nature,  
In which the marble Rome of great Augustus,  
Her temples, baths, and halls clad sumptuously,  
The art of Scopas, Polycleitos, Myron,  
Praxiteles translated; hence arose  
The marble host of emperors, queenly women,  
Antinous, Faunus, and Discobolus,

Rose Helios and Psyche, Bacchus rose  
With Ariadne, Venus, and Minerva ;  
Zeus, the ambrosial curls waving around  
The frowning forehead, and Apollo Phœbus.

Then ages passed ; meanwhile the field lay fallow,  
Till a new harvest ripened other gods,  
And Michael Angelo his Titan brood  
Awakened from their quiet marble bed.  
Then sounds the trumpet, and the mine is fired,  
The blocks roll thundering down the deep descent,  
And the high-wheeled cart receives its freight  
Which, by long-horned oxen, slow of foot,  
But strong of neck, is dragged along the groove  
Of the steep furrows to the shipping-place.

" The greatest artist can conceive of nought  
That does not lie within a block of marble ;  
The hand but that obeys the guiding mind  
Forces its way to what lies there concealed."  
So spake the master — Michael Angelo —  
And saw the youthful giant-slayer, David,  
Sleep in the marble, and his hand struck off  
What shrouded him. Then for the princely tomb  
Of the great Giulio rose that Mother of God,  
So strange of countenance, as if from anger  
That the audacious hand had called her up  
To give her breast again to th' Child of Sorrow.  
Rachel arose, and Leah ; Moses broke  
With giant thews the stone, nostril and lip  
Curling with scorn — then Medici demand  
From Michael Angelo a deathless fame.—  
Lorenzo rose — the thinker, Giuliano.  
The soldier, and the four times, Day and Night,  
The shimmering Daybreak and the Evening gloaming,  
The veiling marble yet but half cast off:  
All twilight children of thy brooding brain —  
Buonarroti, whom thy wrath created,  
Thy holy rage, when thou didst rudely fling  
The Ideal in the fickle world's face.

But rest, tempestuous spirit, milder art  
And softer heart knows beauty too ; 't may be—  
Frown not in wrath—that the Ideal may set  
A bound which thou didst break. And yet, perchance,  
Carrara bears with honor other names.  
Canova—blindly worshipped, and as blindly  
Contemned in our days. Thorwaldsen, both great,  
And Flaxman, Rude, Rauch, but pause—no man  
To his own age is hero ; Death alone  
Must weave the laurel wreath ; Time, yet afar,  
Dispel the mists of envy or of blindness.

And ah ! how many an artist, many a man,  
Spoils pure material working it ! The chisel  
Meets in a noble part a stain or flaw.  
How much unbeautiful, ignoble, feeble,  
Arose e'en here ; but let it be forgotten,  
In beauty only, shine thy name, Carrara.

And now, what undreamed beauty shalt thou bear ?  
What sleeps still in thy depths, where Dante sleeps,  
Though Michelangelo's reverence saw him there,  
But might not waken him ? What future lies  
Veiled from our sight ? A lovelier sleeper yet  
Than Rome or Florence wakened in their prime ?  
Ah, yes ! she lies there still, thou'lt see her features,  
When once " the hand obeys the guiding mind,"  
And hews away the False that hides the True.

" Excellent, my child ; very good !" said Mr. van Walborch ; " it is perhaps the best thing you have written yet."

Aisma said nothing for a while. At length he broke silence :

" It is so difficult for a layman to say anything that — means something. I think it beautiful, and I feel that it is so ; but I cannot rightly express what I feel."

"Ah!" said Marciana, laughing, "now you can comprehend for yourself the difficulties under which we labor when we stand before the beautiful work of a painter. Then we are afraid of saying something silly, or falling into commonplace. That is because you here, just as we there, are not acquainted with the technical side—the artistic. Do you see? *We* have that side, too."

"Do instruct me a little; tell me, how do you write such a thing now? Does that come, as they say, *aus einem Guss*? It seems as if it were cast into form at once, and could not be otherwise."

"Yes, and no; sometimes it does, sometimes not. Sometimes measure and words run in my head, and then I put them down as they come. Sometimes after long seeking and grouping, till there comes a moment when the fluid mass crystallizes and takes shape, like the freezing snow-flake."

"I don't know how you can produce color and line in that way by means of words, how you get that and no other tone and harmony into them."

"That comes from the choice of words; just as some colors answer to a certain feeling, and express that. So it is also in a poem; that is produced by the sounds—the vowels and consonants, their similarity or contrast, their assonance and consonance, and by rhythm. One feels that one's self, just as I suppose you do your tone and tint."

"I never paid attention to that," said the painter, astonished; "to those various vowels and consonants! Now I understand it better."

"You painters think it wrong if people ask first, 'What does that mean? what is the subject and aim of it?' and overlook the beauty of the object itself. So with us. It is true that with us the subject is of more importance; but a poem possesses *artistic* value not because of what it *says*, but of what it *is*. This lies in the poetical expression, in melody and rhythm."

"But how did people come to make this form, which differs so radically from prose?"

"Prose is like architecture: the forms may be as beautiful as they will, but the chief point is utility; its fitness for the purpose to which it is to be applied; the purpose of prose is a practical one."

"And poetry is like painting?"

"To a certain extent. As regards form it is more like sculpture. Music resembles painting; it is something far less positive and palpable, resting more on impressions to be made on the mind. A piece of poetry is bound fast in its exterior shape, just like a statue, and it has just as little practical purpose. But as regards expression, diction, that, I think, must be like Da Vinci's draughtsmanship, with its sharp-cut outlines and dimly-defined modelling. If the form, that is, rhythm, metre, rhyme, has to be strictly defined, the expression, the choice of words, must have something not too positive; there must be more of the impalpable, of that which is felt. A word too concrete, a word too positive, a word reminding of some commonplace subject, often entirely destroys the impression. 'Why in verse?' people ask sceptically. The answer is very simple. When the

feeling swells, the language naturally swells with it. The choice of words and the construction of sentence are different; the expression quickens and soars. Just observe how, if a person is lively or animated, or if he be moved, his language changes entirely; he gesticulates, his features work, his color is heightened. When the mind is exalted the body is so also. Movements become livelier, become rhythmical. So with the language. And this is rhythm. The gay dance of words or the solemn march of expression and sentence, is like the stately minuet, the subtle waltz, and the wild *taran-tella*. The thought brings its own rhythm with it. I have just been comparing sculpture to poetry. Why those settled forms in a poem? As a statue is hewn from the block and fashioned into a compact object, so is the poem hewn out of word quarries. A poem is equally condensed, an epitome, a quintessence. To render in words the motive of a statue or painting, many pages of prose would be required; and so is it with a poem. It is very much compressed. How many pages of prose should I need to render in tone, ideas, feeling, impression, the effect of that little piece 'Carrara'? How many words would be wanted sometimes to reproduce a single word or note? At least six times as many."

"I beg of you read your poem to us again, and very slowly this time."

Marciana read it again, throwing in an explanation here and there on the choice of a word, the structure of a sentence, or the metre.

"Thank you for your delightful present, and the way you have enlightened me."

"It is reciprocal," said Marciana. "Well, tomorrow we go to the Sistina and the Vatican, do we not?"

When Aisma reached home he read her poem once more, and kissed the beautiful, bold hand-writing. A joyous music sounded jubilant in his soul. In hers there was strife and unrest. Proud, obstinate self-possession and frank self-surrender, friendship and love, tenderness and strength, truth and illusion, rose in arms against each other, and clashed until she could no longer distinguish one from the other. The prize was a soul, yearning for the closest sympathy, but fearing, fearing to confess itself subdued

## CHAPTER XXIII.

MARIETTA, Marciana's maid, was a handsome Trasteverina with masses of black hair, with the natural elegance and cast of features that the people of Rome have inherited from their forefathers, as a living contradiction to the theory that the inundations of Goths and Slavs had swept away the character and aspect of the old Italians. She was an honest girl, full of naïve superstition and very ignorant, as the children of the lower classes in Italy generally are. No scholastic serpent had ever offered her reading and writing, those apples of the forbidden tree, or tempted her away from the Eden

of her ignorance. One day she came to Marciana with the question :

"Signora mia, the painter has asked me to sit to him as a model in the clothes you once dressed me in here. Do you think I might do that?"

"Certainly you may. He has spoken to me about it too, and I have no objection. But — it is not I whom you ought to ask, but Angelo."

"Oh! Angelo!"

"What! are you no longer good friends?"

"I do not know. He was to marry me before Easter, but then he put it off again and tried to find excuses. And yet I should like to have him. Does the signora know what a girl must do if a man won't?"

"Then you must only 'won't' too, and he will come back."

"Would that do? But I dare not risk it. Shall I tell the signora what I have tried? There is an old woman here who is a witch. Jesu Maria, what a witch she is! And now she has melted a waxen image for me, to make him give in, you know; and while it was melting I said ten Ave Marias and ten prayers to St. Joseph."

Marciana found nothing strange in this combination of ancient Roman sorcery and modern Roman devotion; she was used to it in Rome. The vitality of old popular customs is astonishing, and a great many customs prevalent in Rome are nothing but baptized relics of ancient Roman ones. In the *osteria* the men sometimes improvise among themselves playful dialogues in verse, some-



times to the accompaniment of the guitar; this is the old Roman Satura. Parents still cause their sick children to touch the image of a saint, just as the ancients caused theirs to touch the bronze wolves of the Capitol or the statue of a god. The Lares and Manes, the household and rustic deities, have been transformed into saints. But Marciana could not help thinking that Joseph was not exactly the right man for a girl to apply to, his marriage being rather out of the usual course of things; as is visibly expressed in all paintings, where he stands somewhat aloof, looking with profound melancholy at the Divine Child who was indeed his wife's, but over whom he had no paternal rights.

"And which has had effect, the waxen image or St. Joseph?"

"Well, I think they have both done good. At least, Angelo is much kinder than he was; and so I should not like to make him jealous now. And he gets so so quickly, for, do you know, the men are always looking at me. It is really a nuisance, signora mia, to be pretty."

Marciana, who was highly amused at the naïve and earnest way in which this was said, set the girl's mind at rest, and gave the permission asked.

So Marietta had gone to Aisma, and he had draped her in the antique costume, and made her sit as Marciana had sat on the bench in the Villa Borghese—with her arm resting on the back of the seat, with flowers in her lap, with her back to the light, merely illumined by reflections.

In this posture he intended to represent her on the marble bench, with a young man beside her, bending towards her, holding her by the sleeve, and pleading for an answer, which she hesitates to give. It proved one of his sunniest, most masterly water-colors.

He first drew a slight sketch of his model, and then made an elaborate study. When he had completed the latter, he washed in the first sketch lightly with water-colors and gave it to Marietta.

"Take that to Battoni the picture-dealer, and don't give it him for less than a hundred lire. That is to help you furnish your house, Marietta."

The girl was in ecstasies, and thanked him with Roman *grandezza*. Then she asked him not to tell Angelo. She had also implored him on no account to make the picture a likeness. She saw now that the figure had gold-brown hair.

"Ah, just like the signora!" thought she, and she was satisfied, for Angelo could never recognize her jetty locks in the figure portrayed there. Yet once more she begged him not to say anything to Angelo.

"But, child," said Aisma, "you have not been doing anything wrong."

"Oh, I know that well enough; but with us models are always looked down upon. Still—this is different, and—now I think of it, the signora has done it too."

"Indeed! For whom?"

"Why, for the sculptor. Angelo told me that."

Aisma became thoughtful. What was he to think of

that? It went against him to act the spy and draw out the girl, so he held his peace. But Marietta observed nothing of this, and proceeded :

“ Yes, Angelo told me it was kept a great secret, and he was sent out of the way ; but he understood all about it, for Signor Askol had smashed the arm of his statue to pieces in a fury, and when he came back he found the arm modelled anew and much better. La signora has very pretty arms.”

What he had heard from Marietta had spoiled Aisma's good humor. He brooded over it constantly, and the more he thought of it the more disagreeable it became. Wrath and fury welled up within him. Less than ever did he know what to think of Marciana, of her character, of her feelings towards himself. He had seen this intimacy, their sympathy of soul, waxing stronger and stronger. For his own part he had put away all self-delusion, and frankly confessed to his own heart that his sentiments had developed into love, deep love. She had granted him merely a union of soul, a lofty friendship : such had been her words, but he was of opinion that this was only a defensive measure, and that at the bottom of her heart she felt something more, something of a different nature. But now his wounded pride afforded a fruitful soil for suspicion to take root in. “ Has she, then, been playing with my heart all the time? Is it merely that her vanity was gratified? Is it for Askol she feels the love that I hoped and sometimes fancied was mine? he to whom she has actually granted

what she persistently refused to me? Yes, far more; the woman that grants that gives more than a sitting for a portrait." He knew that the sculptor admired her; that she treated him with great cordiality. He felt now that his affections had struck deeper roots than he thought. Disappointment and disillusion arose in his soul, and grew into wounded pride and anger, which, constantly fed, deepened into bitterness.

When a piece of earth loosens from its position, the displacement extends, the mass waxes in force, and a single clod that lost its hold grows into a landslide.

It was not so much the fact itself; but that therein lay a proof, a proof confirmed by all manner of trifling signs, that she had been amusing herself with the homage of two men, that she was coquetting with one of them — perhaps with both; that she did not return his love, but still encouraged it; that she was only cold-hearted, vain, and selfish.

He tortured himself thus for some days, while the friends in the Piazza di Spagna could not conceive what was keeping him away.

What to do now? He would break off this friendship; wrench off the suffocating bonds, and make himself once more free. Free! It was for the purpose of becoming free that he had travelled. He would go away. Sometimes there came a moment of calmer reflection. He thought of speaking to her and telling her everything. He thought of demanding an explanation from Askol. But what right had he to do so? Did they owe him any explanation? But — if it should turn out

not to be true! Suspense is more torturing than certainty, so one day he repaired to Askol's studio.

He found the sculptor downstairs, busy perfecting some trifles in a plaster-cast of his Amazon group.

Askol welcomed him with his usual gay cordiality; but Aisma was stiff, and did not even take his hand. At the sight of this particular statue he could not control his temper, and asked, without beating about the bush:

"Is it true, sir, that Mrs. van Buren gave you a sitting for that statue?"

Askol was amazed, and a little disconcerted; but he answered curtly, and without hesitation:

"For that statue? No, sir, that is not true."

"You are speaking an untruth; I know it for a certainty."

The blood rushed to the sculptor's face, and his eyes flashed fire.

"Give me your hand on it that it is not true?"

"Sir, that is what you have no right to ask. My word must be enough. Mrs. van Buren must not be the subject of any such discussion between us; it is an insult to her."

"If it is true, it is an insult to me."

"Mr. Aisma," said Askol, after some reflection, speaking calmly and coldly, "such words as these have often led to insults which in their turn have involved serious consequences. You are quick-tempered, and so am I; but—you are a *man*, and I am one too. I see no necessity for us to make fools of ourselves. It is neither you nor I who would be injured by it, but a

woman who stands far too high for us to be justified in bandying about her name. Therefore—not another word on the subject, and let the matter rest where it is.”

Aisma was in doubt and perplexity. Anger and a certain shame were awakened by Askol's calm and dignified words. He felt that he had no right to insist on an explanation, and reluctantly he came to the conclusion that there was nothing further to be done. So with a formal good-bye he went away, conscious that in this matter Askol had proved his superior; and he was all the more discontented and irritable on that account.

He went home, avoiding the thoroughfares, and flung himself on a sofa. He shut his eyes, and gave free scope to his imagination.

“I came to Italy to find peace and clearness of mind—and what have I found? Serenity and wisdom were just beginning to recover dominion over me. I had resolved never to let a woman disturb the course of my life again—and behold!

“Again I am disquieted, miserable. There stands my work, and all pleasure has quite gone out of it. I lack self-possession to work on quietly. It is always that woman who rises up before me. I have again let myself be made the plaything of a coquette. It is despicable; and if I am forced to despise myself, it is a woman who is again the cause. Accursed be the tumult she excites within us, and the ruin she works! Am I, then, doomed to be constantly humiliated by the woman I love? Love—pshaw! Why did I love before I knew her well, and had read her through and through?

"Oh! I thought I had found in her the soul that I need — that I long for so ardently. She had so much that is lovable, so much that is good, I thought; I fancied she at least was sincere."

A tear of mortification rose to his eye; he buried his proud head in the cushions. When he had given vent to his grief he felt relieved. He was calm, but he continued resentful.

His resolution to leave was matured. He would bury himself in study and work, devote himself to art alone. He would go to Greece, towards which he had always felt an attraction, and live in the land of his loveliest visions. He spent a few days arranging his affairs.

Then he went to Ada. She found him strangely moved and unlike himself. She could not understand why he was going to depart so suddenly — though she suspected that something must have happened, and soon gathered from his words that Marciana and Askol had something to do with it. Still she could not guess what had occurred, and it was a thing he could not tell her. She heard only that he was bitter and sharp in his expressions concerning Marciana. It grieved her, and she sought to soften his feelings, but she had to continue groping in the dark, and to confine herself to generalities. And yet gentleness and tenderness, even if they are irritating at the moment, have often more influence than strength. Where the latter crushes, the former polishes the sharp angles and binds up the injured parts. Aisma gradually became convinced that he was making too

much of the matter, and reasoned himself into greater composure. He would show Marciana that he felt hurt: he would be cold, haughty, but display no anger or passionate regret. For subtle diplomacy he had no skill; he was open and straightforward; and he resolved simply to tell Marciana the whole truth.

He wrote to her:

"I must speak to you. Come to the Villa Borghese to-morrow at two o'clock, beside the fountain

"SIW. AISMA."

She wrote in reply:

"Your tone is strangely peremptory; but I will come.

"M."

Aisma was there, restless and agitated, long before the appointed hour. The time he had to wait seemed endless—minutes are endless at such times. How many thoughts course through one's head then before the pulse has beat a hundred. And yet she did not appear. Was she not coming? He saw the minutes creeping slowly by, every minute full of doubt and torture. And they grew to fifteen. Then he saw her coming; she seemed to be in no hurry, for she was plucking wild flowers by the way. That composure looked like indifference, and tried his patience. He turned away to hide the embarrassment which is apt to result when people meet in such moments. He now heard her voice behind him. She knew something of what was passing in his mind, from Ada: she knew from Askol what had happened between them: but she betrayed no emotion.



"Good morning," she said, with a sweet smile; "are you there again? We have missed you long."

"The missing cannot have been very painful."

"We have given you no cause to think thus. My uncle is truly sorry that you are neglecting us. Is there anything wrong?"

"Marciana," he said, unable to preserve his cold tone, "I want to be frank with you; do you be frank likewise. You have seen well enough what I feel for you. I thought you had given me something of your soul too. But now I find you strange; I do not understand you."

"No, you do not understand me," she said; and there was a deep sadness in her tone, which did not escape him.

"Marciana, let me tell you everything. Do you not know, then, that I admire you, that I love you with all my soul? that for this reason I have put away my pride and my bitterness, as false and despicable trash; that I have delivered myself over to you without reserve? I hoped you would do so too. But, to speak honestly, I have the fear, I have the certainty, that you are playing with my heart."

"You have no grounds for that. If you love me you ought to know me better."

"Tell me frankly. You have always refused to let me paint your portrait; I implored you to be the model for my Helen. . . ."

"Is that all?" she said, with a forced laugh.

This reproachful tone wounded her pride again, and

yet at the bottom of her heart she was rather dissatisfied with herself, for she felt that he had some reason to be offended.

"No, not all. But—is it true that you have done for Askol what you so obstinately refused me? That is something, surely. Is it true, or is it not, that you have consented to serve as his model?"

"You have no right to question me on such a subject."

"Very true," he said, scornfully, "I have not that *right*; but I have a right to see from this, and many other trifles, that you do not care for me, since you condescend to serve as his model. Perhaps you are trifling with us both; but I do not suffer any to trifle with me."

"Who told you that story?"

"I learned it from Marietta, who heard it from Askol's assistant."

"Ah, ah! the tittle-tattle of servants! Very good. I am not called upon to answer such a question.—But, even if I had done it—I should think I am at liberty to do what I choose. At all events, you surely—do not think me capable of a low action. You think, perhaps—bah! I know not what."

"My God! I think nothing low, if I did I would not speak to you. But I see in it a proof that I shall do well to cut myself free from my tender affection, and go away. Only I did not want to do that before I had spoken with you, and given you a chance to clear up matters. I wish you would be more open with me."

"Aisma, I have never been anything but open," she said, proudly. "I have always dared to show openly what I am. I show myself no other than I am. I have no love for Askol, though I think him pleasant and amiable. Yet I see no reason to keep him at a distance by freezing stateliness. I need life and freedom and cheerfulness. Do you take that for coquetry? I do not want to charm so as to make any one unhappy, or to make a silly conquest, but simply because I don't choose to be unattractive, *voilà*. I want to be free. But you are jealous and masterful. You know that I—I—like you with all my heart; but you are fiery—and I am not made of wax either.—Do not let the two locomotives come into collision—that would only lead to disaster."

Marciana had sat down on a bench. An expression of deep mournfulness overshadowed her beautiful face; her breast heaved, it cost her a violent effort to repress her tears, and there was a choking sensation in her throat. One thought arose, almost too strong for her: "Oh, if I could yield now, perhaps I should be happier." But yield!—this was her weak point, yield she could not; her high spirit became stony pride; her self-possession barricaded her heart with ice; to bend was weakness.

Aisma could not master his emotion.

"Oh, Marciana! you, you! I would have devoted myself to you; my talents that you would enhance; you would make my life a delight—and yours—your own also! Put that accursed headstrongness away from you;

you are fighting against your better self. One single word from you is enough."

Why did she not speak that word? Man often bears his greatest enemy within himself. And that enemy is a sophist; he reasons with artful logic, he can be so sensible, he assumes such fine attitudes; he knows your faults and idealizes them into virtues; self-will is called strength of character; selfishness, independence; yielding is called weakness.

Often does it happen, likewise, that if people were left long enough to themselves the struggle would resolve itself into harmony. But if another attempts this by argument and persuasion, the attempt fails; we fall back into our old faults, accustomed to bid defiance to pressure from outside.

Aisma knew not what a violent struggle was going on within her — that she would fain have laid her head on his bosom and sighed for light, but was too proud to succumb.

"Have you nothing more to say to me?" he asked gloomily.

She did not speak. There was a conflict within her; all was chaos and darkness. But she could not say a word. They walked on in silence.

He accompanied her to the gate.

"Our paths lie apart, madam," he said, coldly. —  
"Do not think me impolite if I go this way."

She went back alone. It cut her to the heart. But she persuaded herself that it was no pain to her. "He is not what I thought and hoped. With such an irritable,

despotic temper, it would be nothing but unhappiness all over again," she thought.

He wandered away along the Ripetta, unconscious of what was going on around him—of the priest loitering along towards his church; of the people kneeling before a house where the last sacrament was being administered; of a gay train of young men on horseback, one of whom called him by his name. All these things were as nothing to him now. "All is over," he thought. "She is devoid of feeling; she is no true woman. There are women who feel no desire for a harmonious double life, who are cold-blooded *solitaires*. Woe unto me, that my heart should have gone out to such a one!"

## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE blossoming twig of their tender liking was rent asunder, and on both sides the flowers drooped.

There was a strain also between Marciana and her uncle, and between her and Ada; the silence that exists when people have not yet opened their hearts to each other.

Van Walborch and Ada had indeed understood some things, and guessed others. A general remark had been exchanged occasionally, but no frank explanation had as yet cleared up matters.

Words frequently rose to Van Walborch's lips; but he shrank from uttering them. He knew Marciana

and Aisma; he knew that it might be imprudent to disturb the course of events. "Let it ripen," he thought; "let them fight it out between themselves."

But yet thunder-clouds were gathering over his Horatian "equanimity;" the *æquus animus* kept its ground with difficulty. "It is difficult to shake off the man," said the philosopher Pyrrho, when he, the apostle of apathy, climbed into a tree to shun the bite of a dog. And so it is; religious dogmas or philosophical systems, the Bible or Horace, Pyrrhonic apathy, anachoritic mortifying of the flesh, Spartan hardiness — it is all one; it is all theory, and life is constantly rising superior to theory. Only the old Greek mind was wise, and yielded to grief; it might seek to remain master of itself, but it did not deny pain. To be hardened against suffering is quite as foolish as to let one's self be mastered by it. And so, in spite of culture, Nature continues to vindicate her rights and maintain our human feelings intact. Van Walborch wavered between Horace and his feelings. In his head rang the well-known lines, "Temper the bitter with a gentle laugh — nothing is happy in every respect; rule your soul, or it will rule you; patience makes it easy to bear what we are unable to alter."

Yet he was low-spirited; he took the matter to heart; an illusion was dispelling. Marciana's inflexibility vexed him, and so did Aisma's self-will. He was at his wits' end. At length he hit upon an expedient. He wrote a note to Aisma about the picture of Helen, expressing his wish that he would finish it before he left,

that he might have it as a remembrance of their friendship and the pleasant time they had spent together in Rome. Aisma sent a polite answer, overflowing with gratitude and assurances of high esteem, but — he could not finish it now; indeed it was not likely that it would ever be finished. He begged Mr. van Walborch to accept his excuses, for he *could* not fulfil his promise.

Then Van Walborch plucked up his courage and went to him.

"My dear friend," he said, "I should so much like to have a candid talk with you."

His voice trembled, and he did not know how to begin. Aisma was embarrassed also. The situation was so strange, and offered nothing palpable, no starting-point.

"And you were going away then — and — leaving us in that way?"

"I believe it is best. What else can I do?"

"To Athens?"

"That has long been a project of mine."

"I would not go just now, if I were you."

"Why not?"

"Don't you know that the cholera is raging there? It would be criminal recklessness."

"That is what people say; but is it true? And then even. . . ."

"You are over-excited — what's the matter? Has Marciana been hurting your feelings?"

"I have no right to complain. I have only been imagining — what it appears is not true."

Van Walborch took his hand.

"Speak out freely. — You love her. — Come, if I tell you that this has been my fondest dream, will you then trust me?"

Aisma was moved, and returned his cordial grasp.

"That was my dream too, but she seems not to share. . . ."

"Have you good grounds to think so? Do you know woman's nature well enough not to be deceived by appearances? She is peculiar. . . ."

"I have told her openly, but she requited me with coldness. She has not treated me straightforwardly and sincerely, — it is the way of most women though. She has been playing with me."

Van Walborch knit his brows.

"That cannot be. Marciana is sincere."

"If you call that sincere — but you do not know all. Ah yes, she has favored me with a sort of spiritual affection, but at the same time she gives Askol her love."

"My dear Aisma, you are altogether mistaken now. Is that the whole business? Then I can assure you solemnly of the reverse."

"I cannot tell you everything—but to me it is clear enough."

"Nothing is clear here, I tell you, but as regards Askol — no, that I can assure you. No, there is something else, which I know very well. Aisma, Marciana has been unhappy; *now* she has full freedom of thought and action, and she is afraid she might lose that again.



But I should not know her as well as I know my Horace, if I did not see that she herself is torn with the fierceness of the struggle between that fear and her heart — and to whom that heart is inclined — that cannot be a matter of doubt to either you or me. Promise me one thing: do not go to Athens, at least do not go soon. If you have a friendly regard for me, promise me this."

Aisma shrugged his shoulders incredulously, but gave his hand in token that he would fulfil his wish.

Van Walborch felt the *æquus animus* coming slowly back again. He was satisfied with the result of his meditation; it seemed to him that the old politician had not learned in vain to deal with men and to penetrate the secrets of their hearts.

He did not find Marciana at home. She had gone to Ada, whom she found in one of those melancholy moods wherein her life was vacant and purposeless, wherein she did nothing but lament over the ruins of her youth. Marciana carried her off to the Villa Borghese. But there was a difference in the minds of the two women. Marciana was no longer cheerful and strong; it was an open question which of the two had least buoyancy.

There at a distance was Aisma. They saw him enter the gallery.

"Ah! that happens well," said Ada, and was about to go up to him, but Marciana held her back and drew her hastily out of his sight into a side-alley.

Ada saw that she was moved, and that her eye clouded.

"I do not understand you," she said. "Why do you prefer not to speak to him? Has there come to be such strife between you?"

Marciana shrugged her shoulders indifferently.

"Let him go his own way — it is of no use."

"Marciana, I thought you two would be united some day."

"Child, what are you thinking of? Your novels have accustomed you to fancy that a man and a woman cannot meet without becoming a couple. But all women are not so silly. It would never do for me to be tamed like a domestic animal."

"Do not mock at everything, my love. You are doing violence to your own feelings; I know it. But it is not right. You are not indifferent to each other — and why should you be? Why not yield to your feelings?"

"Because it would be folly and weakness in me."

"And Marciana has taken a firm resolution not to be weak in anything, has she? That is what she fancies. But do you know what this is? This *is* weakness, the weakness of not *daring* to trust your own heart. The one who is really strong is not afraid to trust. Do you know what else it is? Egotism. You love him and he loves you, and you will not acknowledge it. And why? Because you are egotistical, both of you; that is to say, you will, both of you, be your own masters, and yield nothing to each other. Oh, Marciana! love is so good,

so noble, just because it makes people gentle, and makes self-will, the egotistical will, bend to the desires of another. You are so amiable and so good, but you make yourself out so hard and unfeeling. Oh, pray do not do that!"

Marciana drew Ada towards her and embraced her.

"You are a good girl, my Ada. How do you know all this so well? You, whom I took to be so weak — you are stronger than I, perhaps! But, my dear, you know what I have suffered; you know how I have lived it down: is it not folly to begin anew?"

"I do not know. I have but a poor, half-starved heart for such feelings, but I should think whatever one feels is true. One may distrust one's feelings too much, and self-reliance may become self-will. I should yield if I were pressed — but then I am only a poor, weak creature. He is so good, so noble, so full of mind and soul, a man whose heart is quite as great as his genius. You ought to have thanked Heaven for putting such a man in your way; instead of that, you trample your happiness under foot, and his also. A woman ought to be happy if she possesses the love of such a man."

Ada defended Aisma with a glow on her countenance. Her feelings, diverted from self-contemplation and self-pity, had found another object.

Marciana saw this, and said:

"You would suit him better than I. Why do you not try to win his heart yourself?"

"Oh, Marciana!" said Ada, covering her blushing

cheeks with her hands, and bursting into sobs, "how can you be so cruel?"

"My dear Ada, what is the matter? Have I given you pain?"

Suddenly an idea dawned upon her. — She saw it at once.

"Ada, your heart spoke there; your heart feels for him. . . ."

"Be still! be still! that was an utter impossibility. I am but a ruin, body and soul; I should not be worthy such a man. — Yes, I had learned to feel tenderly towards him — but I saw that you were a fitter mate. He has revered you as a superior being; he has loved you, but you have neglected him out of selfishness and self-will."

Their conversation had reached its climax, and now lagged. Marciana was deeply impressed; she could not conceal that from herself. She had hitherto, not altogether without reason, looked on Ada as an image of exaggerated sensitiveness, without strength of will to bridle and guide it; a feeling which, if left to itself, corrodes, and becomes self-torture. But she could not shut her eyes to the fact that feeling has its fundamental rights, which cannot be suppressed with impunity. Her mind was accustomed not to rest on the surface, but to penetrate to the foundation of things. She became thoughtful, and her contemplation of herself gave her no satisfaction.

The conversation with Ada had given her a shock, and its effect did not pass away. "Oh, human errors

and delusions!" thought she; "and I fancied myself so strong and her so weak, and yet *she* was capable of self-abnegation and *I* was not. Oh, shame! Now she seems to me lovable, while I am odious!"

Once more she collected all her strength to keep herself firm amidst the conflicting feelings that agitated her. She sought distraction and work, but she failed to find them at home or to hold them fast.

Then she went one morning and repaired to Salviati, as if impelled instinctively towards the one man who, in his southern light-heartedness, differed so completely from herself in his nature and his views of life. That contrast was an ironical stimulant, and attracted her.

"I shall go and have some music with him," she thought, and took some pieces with her — Pergolese, Stradella, Handel. "He can teach me a little *technique* again."

She ascended the high stone stairs of his palazzo, that image of fallen splendor. She found him in his room, a long, spacious apartment.

On the walls hung some painted studies, pinned up in the simplest way, the work of his friends. The portrait of a girl testified that even into this life a pair of young, dark eyes had shone; but it was a faded photograph, yellow with years, like the wreath of dried leaves which encircled it. Time had left his mark upon it as upon everything.

Marciana found Salviati laughing with two of the porter's children — the boy to whom he gave lessons on the piano, but who was now playing with his crutches,

and a little girl who was sitting on his knee. After Marciana had entered, another girl of about twelve years old came in, bringing a brazen jug filled with water, with which she besprinkled the box wherein grew the flowers and climbing plants that twined around the window-frame.

Salviati dismissed the little folks with a merry jest, and bade his friend welcome.

"I have come to hear your new piano and to run over some songs. Are you at leisure?"

Salviati was ready; he let his hands stray over the keys, and hummed a gay Italian air.

She turned over the leaves of her music-book, and sang a fragment here and there. They were always serious tunes, and in her voice and manner there was a profound sadness, sometimes a cry of sorrow, more mournful and painful than the written music.

"Oh! oh!" said Salviati, "you are painting everything black to-day; you would set the sun himself a-crying. I miss the cheerful note in your voice, and you look so low-spirited, so *pensierosa*."

Marciana smiled faintly and shrugged her shoulders.

"What shall I say, my friend? We cannot always be light-hearted."

"And why not? In that piano, for instance, lie all sorts of tones, but I need not always be drawing out discords; I need not take everything in minor. I prefer to win from it the light and clear notes."

"You are to be envied for your contentment."

"Not health, but contentment, is the greatest treasure — at least so people say," said Salviati.

"How did you acquire that?"

Salviati laughed gaily; the question seemed to him equally strange and comical.

"Why how should I know? That comes of itself. And why should it not? Rome is a great city; the people are kind and good to me; the sun shines gratis, and where he does not shine there is a refreshing coolness. I have everything I want."

He played a Venetian gondola air, and resumed:

"Why should life be marred with crotchets? Life is too short for that; a spoiled day never comes back again."

"Salviati, I admire you—you who have gone through so much, you who see life in all its brightness and with all its blessings, and yet are not unhappy because you must forego them."

"I have more than most people," he said; and there was something in his tone that was even earnest, and impressed Marciana the more strangely. "I see people who have beauty and knowledge and riches, and who torment themselves that they have nothing to grieve about. I have none of those three, and if I were going to torment myself I should have nothing. Now that I have cheerfulness, I have more than the others."

"And you have your faith?"

"To speak honestly, I don't think faith has much to do with it. Pater Pecchi has been trying to convince me that this life is nothing but a station, where we sit

waiting for the train to take us on to a better one where there are no crutches. But so long as I must hobble along on them here, I get no good of that after-life. Sit waiting for that better one? and meantime fret and fume in the waiting-room? Much better to hobble cheerfully along."

"So you don't do that out of hope for that better life?"

"*Chi lo sa? Chi lo sa?* I must take heed for to-day. We don't consider that so deeply as you Northerns do. You used to be cheerful too; but, Marciana, I have not heard you laugh for days. Sometimes I fear you are ill. And Aisma is so gloomy too, and shuns me. Last time I saw him he said he was going on a long journey. He is a great artist, but he must not take such a dark view of things. He walks about like the doomed in Dante's 'Inferno,' stooping under leaden cowl. Have you not seen him of late?"

Marciana's face clouded, and she could not conceal it.

Salviati noticed it. Shaking his head, he laid his hand on hers.

"My dear, there are clouds betwixt you two. I am your friend—am I not?—and may say so much."

Marciana did not deny it. "But," she said, "I cannot tell you clearly what it is."

"Oh, I dare say it is not clear."

"Don't speak any more about him; it is better that we should not see each other."

"Better still that you should understand each other:



*Volete che v'insegni li tormenti?* All those little misunderstandings amount to nothing. Have you ever happened to read in an old newspaper of all-important anxieties that were to throw the world into convulsions? A week later they prove to be ridiculous, mere trifles."

His hand again sought the keys, and accompanied some words that he half sang, half recited, in his full-toned Italian :

There was once a *donna superba*, incarnation of rose and sonnet ;  
There was once an illustrious painter, right noble in heart and mind ;  
They went about seeking each other, but each of them took the wrong way.

La lá, la la lá, la lá !

Spirits of uncommon vitality had formerly given Marciana strength to rise superior to many sorrows. But it was chiefly irony and humor that had then governed her mood. With Salviati it was the unconcern and gay cheerfulness that spring from the heart itself. She had the gaiety of intellect ; with him it lay in the depths of his being. Now, however, she was quite unstrung, and not even the merry humor of Salviati could elicit a cheerful note.

Yet her visit to him had done her heart some good. When heavy rains have weighed down the leaves and flowers, and the sunshine again illumines them, they do not raise their heads at once ; still, here and there the sunny beams sparkle on the drooping leaves and wet blossoms. So was it with Marciana, albeit not immediately apparent.

## CHAPTER XXV.

MARCIANA'S soul was still a chaos; out of which unrest and self-reproach were rising. Her old theories would not yield so easily, and argued with her that Aisma was despotic, like all men; that he would never respect her independence; and what that meant—surely she already knew too well by bitter experience.

And yet she could not ignore the want, the void that she began to feel. The evenings had become silent and colorless; her sympathies missed the response for which a craving had now been awakened; new ideas and aspirations lay fallow.

She had destroyed everything, for others as well as for herself. A sense of this began to be cruelly oppressive and painful. She could not read, she could not write. One thought incessantly obtruded between her and the book. She became sad and silent; she began to droop and languish.

Van Walborch worked on at his Amazon studies, but the jest that had been associated with them had taken too serious a turn, and spoiled his pleasure in his learned researches. Accidentally his eye fell on the page of Herodotus wherein the story of the man-slaying heroines is narrated.

“Ay, ay!” he muttered half aloud.

“Have you found anything new?” asked Marciana, abstractedly.

"Nothing exactly new; but what is very old is always repeating itself anew. The Greeks captured the Amazons after all."

"But, if I recollect rightly, they slew the men on the ships that carried them off."

"That is true; but, afterwards they could not manage the ships, and were at the mercy of wind and wave."

"Yet they landed in Scythia, did they not?"

"I believe you have studied this passage very thoroughly. You will, then, remember that the Scythian youths hit upon another plan to tame them. They pitched their camp close to that of the Amazons. One day a youth found an Amazon outside of her lines; it seemed she was somewhat weak in the faith, and they arranged to meet again. The Amazon brought a friend with her, and the Scythian a comrade; that was two couples already. In short, in course of time, they all went to live together on the opposite bank of the Tanais. So there was an end of that folly.

"There was another Amazon, too, Penthesileia, who was bold enough to measure herself with Achilles. He wounded her mortally; but when he saw her fall, he thought her so beautiful that he looked down at her in love, and lamented what he had done. Take care; such a thing may happen again — or the reverse."

Marciana was silent.

"As insensible to Herodotus as to Horace!" mused her uncle.

Some days after, he observed with concern that Marciana was retiring more and more into herself, and

that she was growing pale. He could then bear it no longer, and said earnestly :

“ Oh, Marciana, you are sporting on the verge of a precipice. You have been presumptuously proud, and the old gods hated presumption and *hybris*. Child, in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol there was a sacred stone ; it was the terminus, the boundary line, and Jupiter himself respected it. Prometheus. . . .”

“ The independence of Prometheus was too powerful even for Jupiter,” she said, with an attempt at playfulness.

“ Prometheus himself at last submitted to Zeus ; that is, to the rational government of the world, which is higher than individual will. But Prometheus had longer to live than we. When our life has bloomed, it is too late to alter ; in our case, if we resemble him, the play ends with the fall of the presumptuous.”

Marciana was like one who, feeling himself pressed on one side, presses more strongly towards the opposite. She could not yield to another — and, as yet, not to herself ; nevertheless she sometimes wished that she *could* bend her will.

At length Mr. van Walborch lost his classic calm altogether.

“ My dear child, I see you pining and wretched, and I know very well what is passing in your mind. You are doing wrong : you gave him more than one gives an intimate acquaintance in common social life ; you allowed that intimacy to strengthen into the closest

sympathy ; when a piece of childish folly, which, however, weighs heavily, disturbed your intercourse. He wished so much to paint your portrait ; he wished so much to have you sit for his Helen ! What do you mean by being stubborn enough to refuse that and give him pain ? while, on the other hand, you grant him your familiar conversation, your mind, your friendship ; more than this, even — I know that well enough. Thus you attract him and repulse him. That will not do. There is something equivocal about it. In any case, be consistent with yourself, but do not outrage your feelings out of pure self-will."

" Ah ! " she answered, in a moment of softer feeling, " yes, it was a short, sweet dream of mine. My dream lived one sweet spring night ; he who would hold dreams fast seeks to hew a cloud in marble. Past, past ! The reality proved very different."

Van Walborch spoke soothingly :

" Dream no longer ; awake and make life beautiful. Clothe your ideals in true forms ; these will endure. Believe in the good ; and, above all, annihilate that self-will, that selfishness. Renounce some part of yourself ; without *that*, there is no happiness among the children of men. Be gentle, and put away from you that savage pride, that so-called independence. Believe me, child, not in such independence, but in sympathy lies happiness and peace."

" Have I not tried it ? — and how did it reward me ? " she said, bitterly. " Was I not always contented in your home, so long as I preserved my independence ? "

Ah! though the prospect seems beautiful, it remains a mere chance."

He had already told her once that Aisma was going to Athens; now in the course of conversation he let a word drop to the effect that the daily papers were full of disquieting accounts of the disease that prevailed there. She knew what he meant to imply.

Perchance all these things might have persuaded her in course of time, but perchance not, for Marciana was one of those characters who do not easily succumb to external influences; conviction had to be born and developed from within. This at least was what she fancied, for inward conviction is generally nothing more than the reflection within us of what occurs outside.

But Marciana knew more than her uncle could be aware of, and her own consciousness could not but confirm his arguments. She knew what she had done of her own free will for Askol, for the sake of art; what she had refused Aisma for the sake of a caprice. A caprice, even though it might be explained by the shrinking delicacy of love. She knew that she was the cause of the strained and menacing attitude of the two artists. She knew — and this was a weightier consideration still — that she responded to Aisma's sentiments with an affection to which she would not, or dared not, give its true name, and that she had treated him with an apparent coldness, which was only assumed, and which must have hurt his feelings. She knew that she had spoiled an intercourse which had been full of enjoyment for all. She began to doubt whether her perseverance

was not merely headstrong. She began to reproach herself for treating the love of a noble-hearted man and a great artist with so little delicacy and tenderness as she had done at their last interview. It became a remorse and torture to her.

And why was all this? Did she not love him?

Only because, taught, as she thought, by experience, she had resolved never more to yield to such a feeling, for fear that the illusion might again melt into vapor; for fear that she might again lose her independence of thought and action. Ah, would he be able to understand her motives and reasonings? And if he did understand them, would he approve them? Could she herself quite approve them now? Had he ever forced himself upon her? Had he ever attempted to tyrannize over her? And if it should really be sweeter to allow herself to be influenced by a beloved one than to reign alone and solitary on a castled rock? Or, again, might it not be beautiful to be sovereign of another heart; not to enslave it, but as an inspiring power — as love?

There was a touch of human weakness mingled with her cogitations. As long as Aisma had sought to win her with gentleness she had continued to resist; but at their last meeting he had resorted to firmness. The coldness and decision of his leave-taking had given her a severer shock than she thought; and she now felt that, opposed to him, despite her Amazon theory, she was after all but a woman, and the weaker vessel.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

MARCIANA was gradually subdued by the workings of her own mind. Piece by piece she felt her armor dropping from her. The mail was not hewn off at once — as in the case of that high-spirited warrior-maiden the Walküre Brunhilde; but link by link it loosened itself, and that before she was quite aware of the fact. Yet a little while, and she would see herself quite defenceless.

Her affection had not flashed up like a blazing fire; it had ripened gradually. Common studies and mutual sympathies had developed it. The intimacy with Aisma had arisen at first from thirst of knowledge, which grew into interest. Her feminine self-esteem had felt stimulated by the idea that he was not wholly indifferent to her. The skirmishes between their minds, and their agreement in matters of art, had nourished their friendship. A rich poetic life had unfolded itself between them, and that life had become to her a completion of herself — a necessity. Their conversations about poetry and art had entered into the warp and woof of both their souls, and could no longer be removed without injury to the web. Little by little the new threads had covered the old texture, and embroidered it with fair flowers and figures; the old ground had again become as fresh and flowery as a spring carpet on grassy fields.

Like young buds she had seen those feelings unfolding. There is something inexpressibly sweet and sacred



in the opening of the buds: when the sheaths open slowly, the leaflets swell, the colors become deeper in hue, while the fullest and deepest tints are reserved for the heart of the flower which is just about to display itself. Marciana would rather have kept the bud, fearful that the flower, when once in full bloom, would fade. But the spring air had been too potent, and the flower had opened in spite of her.

Now and then she would stray up and down the Corso, a sense of loneliness and desolation oppressing her amidst the full life around her. She wandered about the Villa Borghese and visited the gallery, fearing, and yet secretly hoping, that she might meet Aisma. If she could only see him at a distance, just to know how he was. She did not see him, and a sense of pain oppressed her.

One evening, sitting in her room, she gazed at the distant sky and mused:

Stars, that for aye come back  
At eve on the self-same track;  
Blossoms of Heaven and Night,  
What are ye, what is your might?  
Then, sudden, behold on high  
A gleaming of light flashed by;  
Silent, borne past on a wind,  
Vanishing swift as it came,  
This only leaving behind  
A writing written in flame:  
Uncompleted worlds are we,  
Unfulfilled desires; alas!  
Thoughts of things that might not be,  
Dreams that never came to pass.

She closed the sun-shutters and pulled-to the window.

Her dress stifled her: she replaced it by a loose robe, and let her golden tresses ripple over her shoulders.

She could not refrain from looking at them; they glittered in the light like a veil of gold threads.

"That would be good to paint. Titian has painted his wife thus."

But for what end?

She could not repress a tear.

"Must I then trample down the sweet flowers that are blooming again in my heart?"

She thought of the ring, and took it in her hand, the ring she had received from him at Paestum. That had been a joke, but the jest had turned into earnest. How little she thought so then!

She put it on her finger, and in a sudden tempestuous burst of feeling pressed a furtive kiss upon it.

But the ring would not come off again; the more she pulled, the tighter it seemed to grow. She sucked the part, she cooled her finger in water—nothing availed.

Then she observed that with the rubbing and tugging a spot began to glitter. She rubbed it with a glove; the brown incrustation disappeared, and the gold was more and more visible. Yes, the ring was of gold, and she polished it till it shone like a plain marriage-ring. There were letters engraved on it, scarcely legible; she could not decipher them at first. At last she made them out. It was one of those well-known Roman rings, and the inscription was: "Amo te — ama me."

She whispered these words in a soft voice. They

sounded so musical when she read them aloud, and her heart swelled higher and higher. She felt herself yielding.

Then she flung herself on her bed, listened to the ticking of her watch, and felt the throbbing of her own heart :

" Strength—weakness.  
Strength—weakness."

So it ticked and throbbed in both ; always oscillating between the two extremes. Will it never stop midway ? Ah ! if it stopped it would be too late.

Or did it say :

" Selfishness—love.  
Selfishness—love."

She rose, and began to write incoherent wild verses. Her head sank back into her chair and slumber overpowered her. After some time she awoke with a start ; she had been dreaming of two rosebuds Aisma had given her one morning, and when she took them from her bosom in the evening they were full-blown. She looked about her, and felt to see if the roses were still on her breast. A slight shiver ran through her ; she could no longer restrain her tears. She kissed the ring, long and passionately.

" I can resist no longer," she sighed.

Then she laid herself down. The strain gently released, and she was soon lulled into slumber.

She was awakened in the morning by the singing of the birds outside. Had she been dreaming ? What had

happened? Nay, it was all real, and the ring would not come off her finger.

"And it need not come off, thank God!" she said; "away with all false pretences."

"Alas! 'tis true. . . .

Most true it is that I have looked on truth  
Askance and strangely."

She searched for that sonnet of Shakespeare's in which these lines occur, and read it over:

"Alas! 'tis true I have gone here and there,  
And made myself a motley to the view,  
Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,  
Made old offences of affections new.  
Most true it is, that I have looked on truth  
Askance and strangely; but, by all above,  
These blenches gave my heart another youth,  
And worse essays prov'd thee my best of love.  
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:  
Mine appetite I never more will grind  
On newer proof, to try an older friend,  
A god in love, to whom I am confin'd.  
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,  
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast."

She made a free translation of the poem, altering the close so as to convey still more unequivocally a prayer for forgiveness, marked the original, placed her version signed with her initials in the cover of the volume, made it up into a parcel, and sent Marietta with it to Aisma.

When she entered the breakfast-room she found Mr. van Walborch already seated, reading letters from Holland which had just arrived. She held out her hand smiling, and he gave it the accustomed kiss.

"Child," he said, "I have letters that make it necessary for me to return home in a few weeks; and, indeed, since matters stand as they do, it is better that we should stay no longer."

She laughed merrily, and held out her hand to him again. He looked at her in astonishment, but when she playfully put her hand close to his face he observed the ring, and that it was not one she was accustomed to wear.

"What does that mean?"

"Just read."

He did not quite know what to make of it, but yet he read: "*Amo te—ama me,*" and it did not contribute to lessen his amazement.

"That is the ring Aisma gave me at Paestum. Would you ever have thought that it hid so much?"

He saw by her face, her voice, her gaiety, that something had taken place.

"Yes, that was underneath. I cleaned it of its old dirt. You understand—its old dirt; away with it! Now I shall keep it thus, and never more take it from my finger."

Half abashed, half overpowered with joy, she fell on his neck, and hid her face on his shoulder.

"God be praised! my dear Amazon has come to her senses. Now do you not see that Herodotus was right? And Æschylus, when he made Prometheus himself succumb?"

"Well, it is possible that the old art contributed to it a little; but the new far more, though!"

More heartfelt joy had not fallen to Mr. van Wal-

borch's lot for a long time. He could not rest until Marciana had told him everything—everything.

Aisma's preparations for departure were retarded, as he was awaiting letters which would make his stay in Greece advantageous to his studies. Besides, he was mindful of his promise not to go away immediately. He had, however, taken his Helen from the easel and set it aside. He thought, like the Trojan fathers, "Beautiful though she be, it is better that she depart and work us no further sorrow."

The first excitement had subsided, and he had sought to account to himself for his state of mind. The circumstance that had caused his violent irritation—that which Marciana had done for Askol and refused to do for him—all retired into the background. It had only precipitated the explosion: it was not the first cause—this lay in her inexplicable attitude towards him. She had given him admittance to her heart, albeit she had apparently shut its inmost sanctuary against him. And then, suddenly at the first dispute she had made him feel it. Her affection for him appeared to be less than her self-love. Tenderness and gentleness seemed to be wanting in her. She could be unfeeling towards the man who had given himself wholly to her. This was what had stung him to the quick.

It was with surprise and painful sensations that he saw Marietta make her appearance one morning with a parcel. He had already at a distance recognized the handwriting on the address. He laid down the parcel, fearing to open it.

"Well, Marietta," he said, "have you sold my drawing well?"

Marietta blushed, and replied, hesitatingly: "I was not to tell — but La Signora bought it from me directly, and she has had it put in a frame, all of gold, and hung it up in her room."

What! was she really pleased to have one of his drawings in her own room? Aisma now opened the parcel, and found the book, and the written leaf laid beside two pencil-marked sonnets, CX. and CXI. He read it, and could not conceive what had come over him. He read it again, and his emotion increased. Surely this was unequivocal enough. Was it true, then? Was no hallucination deluding him? The letters danced before his eyes; but the sense was quite clear to his mind: "It is true, I have made old offences of affections new; take what shall have no end; my feelings I never more will grind on newer proof, to try a friend. A god in love to whom I am confined — forgiveness." That was no mere confession of error. Was his heart not right when it felt that between the lines lay more than met the eye?

On the back of the sheet were a few words added later:

"With regard to what you asked about Askol, believe me nothing occurred that could hurt your feelings.

"Do not come yet; let me first probe myself well, and come to a clear understanding — no precipitation.

"Yours,

"M."

Marietta sat waiting in a corner of the studio, admiring the fine stuffs that were lying there, and playing with a coral chain. She had her own reflections. She could not conceive, nor would she have been able to comprehend, the astonishing self-willedness and the ideas that had brought her signora and the painter together and driven them apart again. "They love each other," she thought — and she had thought it a long time; but why, then, did they not give in directly. She had not wavered so long with Angelo when he clasped her round the waist and kissed her; she had said "Yes" at once. But it seemed to be quite another thing with these strangers from the North. She did not know, either, why the signora was so down-hearted and the painter too, and why they never saw each other any more. It must certainly be the fault of the men, for Angelo was sometimes strange too.

Were they going to be good friends again now? she wondered. Surely they were, she thought, when she looked at the painter, for he seemed quite joyous.

Aisma had told her to wait a little, and meanwhile he wrote :

"MY DEAR MARCIANA : — I have understood you, have I not ? and I may call you so for the first time ? I may write the word that my heart has uttered a thousand times, aloud and in whispers. My love ! what you wrote has made me so happy. Do not reproach yourself. I understand quite well now : I was just the same myself before I yielded and owned myself vanquished.



For the rest, I will believe you. I will not come before you are calm and clear in your own mind. 'Forgiveness' you need not ask of me. I should want it from you as well. I take rather 'what shall have no end,' and do you take it from

"Your own  
"SIWART."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

AISMA went out in a joyous frame of mind. It seemed to him as if everything was gayer and there was more life in the streets. He had been quite taken aback. He had had no time to reflect, and been in no mood to reflect at once. Properly speaking, he did not quite understand yet; he had yet to learn the real gist of the matter. The mists were parted; but nothing was clear. Yes, he understood that her soul was tossed to and fro by the same doubt and hesitation as his had been; that she had attained the same consciousness that had come to him earlier; that she felt regret for her tone and bearing towards him; that she did not dissemble her affection.

Musing thus, he was turning the corner of a street when he heard his name called, and suddenly found himself face to face with Salviati and the sculptor. There was no possibility of avoiding them.

"Ho!" cried Salviati, "our friend is glad to see you, Aisma; there must no longer be any misunderstanding. Do you hear?"

"Mr. Aisma," said Askol, "Mrs. van Buren has requested me to give you my hand, and to assure you that there is no ground whatever for any wounded feeling on your part. I do so gladly."

Aisma looked at him. In the sculptor's eyes, which sometimes blazed with enthusiasm, there lay such a true-hearted expression, that it was impossible not to be attracted by it. He hesitated no longer; his own straightforwardness immediately apprehended that of another. And so he let Salviati and Askol carry him off to spend the afternoon together.

Storms had braced their powers of resistance, storms had swept them away from each other; but at length the flowering twigs bent forward and entwined themselves together. In nature there are such moments, when, after crashing thunder and flashing lightning, after the bursting and downpouring of clouds, the tumult ceases and the sun breaks through again.

Then we again hear the carol of the birds, trumpeting with a thousand tongues their relief from terror, their joyous revival, the restored peace of the elements.

Marciana would fain have trumpeted her joy likewise, but she put a restraint on herself at first. Yet too much weighed on her heart, and struggled for confession and utterance. She wrote to Aisma:


"I cannot help writing to you. Yes, you have un-

derstood me right—it was the answer to what you offered and asked me in the Villa Borghese. I had to redress my error. Now that I have once got over my obstinacy, now that I see that I must do no further violence to my feelings, my good, faithful Siwart, I cannot but ask your forgiveness. Some day I will say much more, and tell you all about Askol; but some time hence, when we are talking confidentially. I have written to him. You need not feel shy of meeting him; there is no further misunderstanding. But now, before I go farther, I must tell you clearly why I doubted and struggled at first; why after that I persisted so stubbornly. How little you thought, when I felt offended by your question and when I treated you so coldly, that I could fain have fallen on your neck and confessed everything and said: ‘No, it is not friendship—it *is* love!’ But I did not fully understand myself. Ah, you must understand me; I have suffered so much in former times, so much misapprehension and misjudgment, so much that is low and coarse. Then, like the Amazons, I would have removed from my breast the feeling which, when wounded, occasions so much misery. I require freedom, and free scope for my own nature, and I thought that was the only means to preserve those. That was my only doubt. But now I know that I need not sacrifice my freedom and my own ideas to you; that I do not lose them when they voluntarily clasp their tendrils around you. You will not lop them off and slight them, I feel sure.

“You said I could elevate you and make you great.

Oh, do not make me too proud, for I would fain be persuaded to believe it.

“ I felt drawn to you from the first, but I was afraid of losing myself, and I thought : Let me keep side by side with him, but independent. I had early learned to create joy out of sorrow, to yield to no complaining mood—not out of humility, but out of pride. My soul had grown old, but my heart was still young, as young as that of a swallow making her first passage over the great wide sea. As time went on, your image blended more and more with my thoughts. When I was alone, and I reflected that my being also filled your mind, when I thought of that with glowing cheeks, I felt that your love had communicated itself to me, and that I loved as I had never loved before. I thought : Let it remain a union of soul only ; but I was well aware that it was more—it was the great high love of which I had once dreamed. My dreams of that great high feeling, of a double life, deeper and richer than the single—all those illusions without name, those emotions and desires without form—revived and assumed more definite shape. Now I am converted ; now I believe in their existence ; now I know. You have awakened me to a higher, greater life. I have become your creature, your own without reserve. And you were going away ? Ah ! you knew too well that for us to part was to dry up the springs of life. Oh, the promised land of Moses. It haunted my brain. I should once have liked to turn that into poetry, it is so beautiful : the God of Moses was gracious to him, letting him die, since he might not



enter that land. For us it is otherwise; the land of promise lies open to us, and we may live.

"Your

"MARCIANA."

That same evening she received a letter from Aisma. It made her very happy.

"I cannot write as well as you do," he said to her, "but my heart is full. A new life! so it sings within me. It sings in my ears like the roll of martial music summoning soldiers to arms; the trumpets thrill my soul, the horsemen rise in their stirrups, wave their blades, and rush to battle.

"I have felt the same feelings you have. I too have been embittered against the world; and I thought that a few wicked individuals made up the world. But our being is distinct from our theory—after all we remain what we are. I understand everything now. Do you remember the pretty little woman at Paestum?—the last rose of Paestum, you called her. How soon every word of yours engraved itself on my memory! No, she was not the last rose; there were more blossoming there, and there was one that neither you nor I dreamed of; yet we brought it with us thence, and one day it unfolded in our hearts."

There was no question of his going away now, far off and alone. He wrote a long, happy letter to his sister, in which everything was mixed up in strange confusion. His Helen was on the easel again, and he painted a whole day long with fire and fervor, his work

betraying the feelings which attuned and inspired him. Undoubtedly it was going to be a work which would live on men's tongues. It was *she* who inspired his genius. Ay, there is no strife, no rivalry between Eros and the Muse. "He whom Eros loves becomes a poet," said Plato, and it is a truth.

Once more Marciana wrote to him :

"I have grown young and audacious again. I could find it in my heart to pour out my feelings in all sorts of ways. I gave you my heart and soul; they had long gone out to you of themselves—there! I have told Ada everything, and her kind heart rejoices in my joy. My uncle is almost as happy as if he had found a brand-new ode by Horace. Paestum, yes! Do you remember the ring you gave me there, by the temple of Ceres? That was a magic ring; it has bewildered me; just fancy that—no, I prefer to tell you all about that. Very soon you will finish your Helen. May I now give you a sitting for her? May I?"

"Why should I wait longer?" thought Aisma; and one morning he sent her a basket of splendid roses. At the bottom lay a little note saying that he was coming presently.

He went to the Piazza di Spagna; his heart throbbed when he arrived at her room door. He entered.

She was standing by her writing-table, and turned her head towards him. She was not flurried: a sweet

smile played over her face, and she looked at him with a frank, trustful glance.

He knew everything now, and without saying a word he passed his arm around her. Her head sank back, her lips parted in a smile of happiness, and the stubborn Amazon laid down her arms.

They did not observe that Mr. van Walborch had come in. His heart rejoiced.

"Felix Roma!" he cried. "This is what my Rome has done."

And when Marciana fell on his neck, and he held Aisma's hand in his, he said to himself, by way of excuse for the emotion that overpowered him, "After all, Horace himself was a man."

When all three, before leaving Rome, together revisited their various favorite sites, they also went to the Capitol. Mr. van Walborch bore them off to the great gallery to the left, to the hall of the Amazon. There they stood before the glorious statue, busy with their own thoughts.

"Now I look at it with different eyes," said Marciana. "Poor Amazon, with your head bent pathetically towards your wounded breast; you remain the same. We human beings can change, happily for us."

Then they went to the altar of tranquillity, the *Ara Tranquillitatis*.

"How often I have sought that here," she said, "but thought to find it by shutting up the heart; and it is not to be found till the heart opens."

"Come here, children," said Mr. van Walborch, who was a few steps ahead; "here is the solution."

And at the foot of the beautiful statue that adorns the niche, he joined their hands and said, "*Venus victrix! Ave!*"

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE midsummer heat caused the travellers to leave Rome and return to the North.

Ada sought a cooler air in the Swiss highlands, leading a solitary, wandering life. Aisma had once inspired her with a touch of energy, but she had let it slip again. Had she had a powerful mind beside her, had she been united to such a one, her frail tendrils might have twined round it and found support. To find strength in herself was scarcely possible to her. There was no envy in her loving heart now that she knew Marciana was happy. Still, a heavier cloud than before hung over her spirits. In time she found an object to which her yearning heart could attach itself, and so find active employment. She had formerly sought this in pet birds and other animals; now, as chance would have it, she found in a *pension* a child that had been neglected and spurned because it had come into the world outside the rules of society. The child delivered her from her inert aimlessness, gave her life a purpose, gave her company. She began to forget herself in it, in the little duties of real life; to exert



herself for that child. The devotion to a child, the care for an infant soul, slew all egotism, all excessive absorption in self. Jesus blessed little children, and it was a wise and a profoundly significant act. The child is the true redeemer. It needs for its rearing a little good sense, a great deal of love, and it is a household god that brings a blessing with it.

Good Salvati occasionally indites a merry letter to his friends.

"Eh," he says, constantly, "life is beautiful after all, if men only don't go about and spoil it of their own accord."

Askol reaped the fame which his Amazon group merited. He informed his friends that he had got an order from America to execute it in marble. Aisma received its photograph without any feeling of bitterness, for he knows everything now, and he is united to his Marciana.

Their first visit in Holland was to Aisma's sister, one of those good angels in whom the gentleness of Ada and the grand strength of Marciana were blended into repose and touched to noble issues. She looked at her brother, and said with a smile :

"Well, has the black side of things the upper-hand now? Is disappointment the sum total? And is solitude the best way?"

"We have purified each other's natures by storms," he said, gaily, "and the sky is high and blue above us again. We will do the sum over again — won't we, Marciana?"

"Yes, we will do it over again; we have summed up its product too soon. I am pretty sure we shall find it to be this — that we do not lose, but gain, when we give ourselves to each other."

Van Walborch can no longer enjoy the daily presence of his Marciana; but he has gained Aisma, and Horace consoles him: "Jupiter det vitam, det opes; æquum mi animum ipse parabo" ("May Zeus give us life and prosperity; I will gain tranquillity for myself").

Already they are making plans to go to Athens together next year.

But Rome has ever continued to be to them "the dæmoniac, the divine city;" and albeit they return to the North, albeit the snow-capped mountain-wall stretches betwixt them and the South, they have taken with them from Italy and its poet-world the eternal sunshine that irradiates their lives.

THE END.

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